

Hafa Adai!

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FHB Gualo Rai closing on June 14

By MARK RABAGO

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EDITOR

First Hawaiian Bank will be closing its Gualo Rai branch in mid-June, leaving the CNMI with the sole FHB branch in Oleai—a decision that FHB's corporate office said wasn't an easy one.

See FHB on Page 4

902 talks letter to Biden possibly sent in April

By FERGIE DE LA TORRE

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REPORTER

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios said Thursday that he and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang are probably going to send a letter this April to President Joe Biden

for their request to hold 902 talks between the CNMI and U.S. governments.

"We hope we get a good discussion," said Palacios in an interview after a panel discussion called

See 902 on Page 4

Contempt charge filed vs. Villanueva



KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

Roil Soil's Shayne Villanueva is seen in this photo leaving the Department of Corrections' booking area after he self-surrendered last Friday pursuant to a contempt charge filed against him.

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

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REPORTER

The Office of the Attorney General has officially filed a contempt charge against

Shayne Blanco Villanueva in Superior Court for refusing to answer questions during a legislative investigation on the previous administration's

See CONTEMPT on Page 4



MARK RABAGO

The First Hawaiian Bank location in Gualo Rai. FHB said it will close its Gualo Rai branch on June 14.

CNMI marked 48th Covenant Day

By FERGIE DE LA TORRE

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REPORTER

The CNMI marked the 48th Covenant Day yesterday, March 24, to celebrate the day when U.S. President Gerald Ford signed the Covenant Agreement that paved the way for the CNMI to enter into a political union with the United States.



Palacios



Apatang



DeLeon Guerrero



Villagomez

In addition to the historic significance of this date, the spirit and the letter of the Cov-

enant are even more important and relevant now, as the CNMI confronts economic hardships,

geopolitical tensions, and other challenges, according to a joint statement yesterday by Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang.

"We look forward to the conversations being hosted around the Covenant's significance and its impact on our islands, and encourage the community to engage in the

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INSIDE



LOCAL

The Friends of the Arts welcomes back renowned classical pianist Roman Rudnitsky.

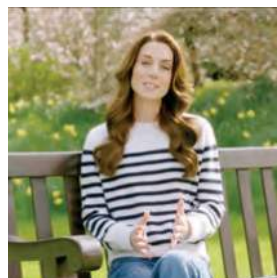
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LOCAL

An aquaponics park has been reopened on the University of Guam campus by the College of Natural & Applied Sciences.

PAGE 10



LIFE & STYLE

Kate, the Princess of Wales, has cancer and is undergoing chemotherapy, she revealed Friday.

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Local

'Gov't retirees not at fault for pension overpayments'

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Senate President Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan) believes it is unfair, unreasonable, and unconscionable for government retirees, who are not at fault, to be required to pay back overpayment of benefits.

DeLeon Guerrero said retirees can't afford to pay back the overpayments, which range from several thousand dollars to hundreds of thousands of dollars.

In line with this, the Senate president recently filed a resolution requesting the NMI Settlement Fund to waive recovery of overpayments of benefits from retirees based on fairness, equity, and good conscience.

She stated in Senate Resolution No. 23-16 that the Set-

tlement Fund should waive the recovery of all overpayment of benefits from all affected retirees and dismiss all administrative and court cases where the Settlement Fund is seeking recovery of overpayment of benefits.

DeLeon Guerrero said the retirees are terrified of being sued in court to recover the overpayments.

She said the retirees cannot afford to pay back the overpayments let alone afford to pay for lawyers to defend them against recovery of such overpayments that were miscalculated through no fault of the retirees.

In March 2015, the Settlement Fund, utilizing a benefits audit software, identified 399 overpayments and underpayment member (retiree) files.

DeLeon Guerrero said after the manual five-step review process was completed, member files with no issues were closed out.

There were 247 files that did not have issues and 152 files that had issues. Members whose files had issues were given a formal notice, and an opportunity to respond or settle.

Pursuant to the Settlement Fund's Trustee's report dated Sept. 27, 2017, out of the 152 retiree files that had issues, 131 files involved overpayment of benefits and 21 files involved underpayment of benefits.

Since March 2015, the Settlement Fund has attempted to resolve the 152 files with issues.

DeLeon Guerrero said as of September 2023, there are

133 retiree files with issues involving overpayments and 16 retiree files with issues involving underpayments pursuant to the Trustee's report dated Oct. 24, 2023.

She said subsequently, over 200 retirees received letters from the Settlement Fund, informing them of an "adjustment" to their pension "to reflect the correct amount" after it was determined that the overtime work they performed during their active employment may not be used to calculate their benefits.

The president noted that it was reported that the Settlement Fund administrator Lilian M. Pangelinan informed the affected retirees that beginning with the pay period ending Nov. 15, 2023, "the Settlement Fund will adjust your benefits to reflect the correct amount..."

She said Pangelinan cited the adverse decision letter that the former NMI Retirement Fund issued on May 7, 2012, notifying each retiree of the overpayment of benefit they had received over the years.

For those who did not appeal the decision, Pangelinan said, "the findings in the letter are final and binding."

DeLeon Guerrero said in addition to adjusting benefits more or less pursuant to the benefits audit of retiree files, the Settlement Fund has been engaged in numerous administrative appeals and court litigation trying to recover the overpayments from retirees, their beneficiaries and the probate estates of retirees for several years.

She said some of these retirement files involve overpayments that have exceeded the six-year statute of limitations for filing a claim to recover overpayments.

DeLeon Guerrero said most, if not all, of the Settlement Fund's claims of overpayment of benefits involve miscalculations or erroneously adding service credits or overtime to an individuals' retirement benefits that is not authorized by law, and through no fault of the retirees.

She said the miscalculations were made by the Settlement Fund's predecessor, the NMI Retirement Fund and its employees.

The president said Settlement Fund's determination to recover overpayments of benefits has shaken the lives of retirees who are subject to the recovery.

She said retirees are being bombarded with letters and notices about overpayments from the Settlement Fund.

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Exhibitors urged to join CNMI Red Cross Walkathon with NMC AHEC

Local health and wellness organizations are asked to participate in the 35th Annual Red Cross Walkathon Community Health Fair on Saturday, April 20, 2024, at Micro Beach, Garapan.

This year's walkathon is hosted by the American Red Cross-CNMI Chapter, in

partnership with the Northern Marianas College Area Health Education Center.

This event provides a platform for health and wellness organizations to showcase their health-related services and products to hundreds of walkers who are passionate about health

and well-being.

Limited spots are available, so interested organizations are asked to register by Friday, April 12, 2024. Registration is available at tinyurl.com/yc4z4e86 or by calling (670) 234-3459 or emailing selmalyntaitano2@redcross.org. (NMC)

NEW BMT GRADUATE



U.S. COAST GUARD/PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS GABRIEL WISDOM U.S. Air Force Airman Kiridu Fegurgur and his family stand for a photo after the U.S. Air Force Basic Military Training graduation ceremony at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas, on Feb. 29, 2024. Fegurgur's family hails from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana and is of the Carolinian culture.



U.S. COAST GUARD/PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS GABRIEL WISDOM U.S. Air Force Airman Kiridu Fegurgur stands for a photo after the U.S. Air Force Basic Military Training graduation ceremony on Feb. 29, 2024. Fegurgur's family gifted him a mwarmwar headpiece and a lighatúttur black and white beaded necklace in celebration of his BMT graduation. Such cultural attire is a statement of beauty. It is used as formal wear, given to someone on special occasion or to celebrate major life events like graduations.

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and shared purpose continue to inspire us.*

HAPPY COVENANT DAY

From the management and staff of

Hafa Adail

Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER



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Purchase and Installation of Windows and Typhoon Shutters for the NMHC Housing Units in Tinian

Project Package will be available on February 26, 2024, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular business hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of One-Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) is required for each set of the project package. Payment must be made payable to NMHC and receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the project package at the reception counter.

The provisions on the NMHC Procurement regulations, NMIAC 100-60-725 AND 100-60-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be held at the NMHC Field Office in Tinian located at the NMC Campus in Tinian on March 1st, 2024, 10:00 a.m. In addition, a Mandatory site Visit/Inspection of the project site will be conducted immediately after the Pre-Bid Conference. Failure to attend both the Mandatory Pre-bid conference and the Mandatory site Visit/Inspection will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-9447 or via email at officemanager@nmhc.gov.net during business hours, 7:30am - 4:30pm Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

/s/ MERCED "MARCIE" M. TOMOKANE
Chairwoman
NMHC Board of Directors

Kilili urges constituents to know options in student debt cancellations

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

With President Joe Biden’s cancellation this week of another \$5.8 billion in student loans for an additional 78,000 public service workers, including teachers, nurses, and firefighters, Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) is encouraging his constituents in the CNMI to learn more about two options for student debt cancellation.

Sablan said in his *e-kilili* newsletter over the weekend that income-driven repayments can be as low as \$0 per month and the balance of the debt can be cancelled in 20 years—or as few as 10 years for some borrowers who have already been making payments for a decade.

Under the second option, if the borrower has served as a teacher, firefighter, government employee, or any other category of public service for

10 years, he or she may be eligible for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program.

Sablan asked borrowers to visit StudentAid.gov/IDR and StudentAid.gov/PSLF for more information about the first and second option, respectively.

Biden said in his statement that these public service workers have dedicated their careers to serving their communities, but because of past administrative failures, never

got the relief they were entitled to under the law.

The President said from Day 1 of his administration, he promised to fix broken student loan programs and make sure higher education is a ticket to the middle class, not a barrier to opportunity.

“I won’t back down from using every tool at my disposal to deliver student debt relief to more Americans, and build an economy from the middle out and bottom up,” Biden said.

Sablan said Biden’s initial effort at student debt relief in 2022 was blocked by Republican appointees on the U.S. Supreme Court in a case brought by Republican state attorneys general.

The delegate said Biden persisted, however, and has now used the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program to forgive \$62.5 billion to more than 871,000 government employees and non-profit workers.

In addition, Sablan said, 1.3 million individuals who took

out federal loans to pay for fraudulent for-profit colleges received \$22.5 billion in debt relief, and 513,000 Americans with disabilities had a total of \$11.7 billion in debt canceled.

He said Biden also instituted an income-driven repayment plan that cuts payments on undergraduate loans in half, saving \$45.6 billion for some 930,000 borrowers.

In all, Sablan said, Biden’s student loan efforts have canceled \$144 billion in debt for over 4 million students.

FHB

From page 1

“After careful consideration, we have made the difficult decision to consolidate our Gualo Rai branch,” said FHB vice president and public relations manager Lindsay Chambers in an email to *Saipan Tribune*. “This decision was not made lightly and took into account multiple factors, including evolving banking trends and the ways we could improve our overall banking experience.”

Chambers confirmed that the Gualo Rai branch’s last day of operations is June 14, a Friday, at 4pm.

“We welcome our customers who banked at Gualo Rai to visit our nearby [Oleai] branch to continue their service Monday-Friday between 9am and 4pm,” she said.

During the transition, Chambers said, they will be actively supporting their Gualo Rai staff.

“To our valued customers on Saipan, we appreciate your understanding during this period of change and want to reassure you of our dedication to serving your banking needs. Please visit our branches or call (888) 844-444 with any

inquiries, we are here to serve you,” she added.

Ed Untalan, FHB executive vice president and region manager, broke the sad news of the Gualo Rai branch’s closing in a letter to customers dated March 7.

“In line with our continuing efforts to streamline and improve our customer service delivery, we will be closing our First Hawaiian Bank Gualo Rai Branch and ATMs at the Gualo Rai Commercial Center located at Chalan Pale Arnold Road, at the end of business day on Friday, June 14, 2024, at 4pm. All your banking transactions will be handled at our nearby Oleai Branch located at the Oleai Center, Beach Road, San Jose after June 14, 2024,” his letter stated.

He acknowledged that closing the branch would be inconvenient to some FHB customers.

“As this change may create a disruption on your normal banking routines, we apologize for any inconvenience that this may cause, but rest assured that we are doing our best to minimize the impact of this change. There will be no changes made to your existing accounts and all of your deposit and loan account numbers will remain the same and

you may continue using your existing checks and deposit slips. We also encourage you to utilize our on-site and off-site ATMs, and our convenient online and mobile banking services. In order to enhance your banking experience, please ask your banker about other alternative convenient banking solutions such as direct deposit, auto pay, auto transfer and debit cards,” the letter added.

Anyone with questions or those who need additional information may call (670) 235-3090.

This comes more than eight years after Bank of Hawaii closed its Puerto Rico and Chalan Kanoa locations and consolidated it into one branch at the Springs Plaza in February 2016.

Businessman Boy Ching said the closure of the FHB Gualo Rai branch is a sign of the times.

“It’s evidence of a diminishing population and shrinking economy. ... The [Oleai] branch will definitely be crowded now as it will absorb Gualo Rai branch clients and so will be the parking area,” he said.

Ching said he’s been a long-time customer of FHB as he first opened an account there

when it was still called Union Bank. He owns, among other businesses, a jewelry shop and a barbershop on Saipan.

Edward Dela Cruz Jr., Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting member, said the development is unfortunate.

“Having two branches really helped out the customers. Now only having one branch will really be tough for everyone to divert to Beach Road, especially during the ongoing construction. ... I hope they didn’t let go of the employees.”

Dexter Tenorio, a sales representative for Genesis Saipan Wholesale, said FHB being condensed into one branch would definitely be a hardship for customers, especially to those who have been used to the accessibility and ease of service at the Gualo Rai branch.

Eunae Jang worries how the merging of branches would affect customer service.

“FHB is one of the big banks on Saipan, and if it were given one branch, it would be a waste of waiting time and it would be crowded with people working. And their biggest problem, not just us, is their employees. A lot of people will lose their jobs,” she said.

902

From page 1

“*Konbetsasion*: Understanding the Covenant” at the Guma’ Hustisia’s Assembly Hall last week.

The governor said that, as Pete A. Tenorio stated during the panel discussion, issues have to be very important and impactful at 902 discussions.

Tenorio, who was one of the 13 members of the Marianas Political Status Commission that negotiated the Covenant, was among the panelists in the *Kobetsasion* organized by CNMI courts.

Palacios agreed with Tenorio that there were several 902 discussions before that were practically useless because the U.S. responded that “those are issues that you need to address.”

The governor said immigration issues, 702 funding issues, how to integrate with the U.S. Department of Defense and other federal government policies will be critical, “but you don’t want to have a whole

menu of things.”

“You’ve got to be very strategic about it and some of these things needs to be brought up in Congress eventually,” Palacios said.

He said they are looking at different lawyers who have experience in 902 talks and critical issues to be part of the team.

Palacios said the original plan was for him to put together different issues that have to be submitted to Biden for consideration. He said different sectors of the community advocated that the 902 team “should do this and that.”

Palacios said he agrees with Tenorio that the 902 talks is not a mechanism where you just throw in a host of issues; the issues have to be very impactful and meaningful, as this is a serious process with certain protocols.

The Covenant that created the unique relationship between the CNMI and the United States provides for the 902 talks every 10 years—if either government calls for it to consult on issues affecting their relationship.

CNMI

From page 1

activities that have been organized to commemorate its passage,” said Palacios and Apatang in their statement.

Negotiated over the course of 27 months by members of the Marianas Political Status Commission, the Covenant underscores principles that protect the safety and well-being of the people, promote community health and welfare, promote free enterprise and the advancement of economic development, promote justice, expand educational opportunities for students, and most importantly, improve the overall standard of living for each individual that calls the islands home, they added.

Palacios and Apatang both urged CNMI residents to reflect on the enduring legacies of the CNMI’s founding fathers and mothers, who forged a robust and strategic partnership that has endured for nearly half a century.

Senate President Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan) said the Covenant gave the Commonwealth the right to self-government and the opportunity to decide and revisit matters of mutual interest of both governments.

“It is also through this uniqueness of our relationship that we as the CNMI, in the interest of her people, are able to achieve more as an equal partners in this political relationship,” DeLeon Guerrero said.

Covenant Day is usually described as the day when the islands entered into one of the most unique political relationships in the world, a Commonwealth in political union with the United States. For that reason, Covenant Day is an important day in the CNMI’s history, according to House of Representatives Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan).

“It is basically the beginning of our Commonwealth as we know today and also defined our relationship with the United States,” Villagomez said.

CONTEMPT

From page 1

Building Optimism, Opportunity, and Stability Together grant program.

Villanueva was booked Friday at the Department of Corrections after he self-surrendered to police and was able to immediately post bail.

After posting a \$1000 bail, pursuant to an arrest warrant dated March 11, Villanueva was spotted leaving DOC with his lawyer, Keith Chambers.

Saipan Tribune learned that the Superior Court issued an arrest warrant for Villanueva back on March 11 pursuant to one count of contempt charge, but he was off island at the time.

Upon learning of the warrant and charge filed against him, Villanueva agreed to turn himself in to police upon his return.

According to the declaration of probable cause in support of the issuance of an arrest warrant on March 8, House Speaker Edmund Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) transmitted a signed certification statement of contempt for Villanueva to Attorney General Edward Manibusan.

On the same day, Manibusan referred the case to the White-Collar Crimes Task Force composed of the Office of the Public Auditor, the OAG, and the Department of Public Safety.

The declaration alleged that on March 5, during the House of Representatives’ Special Committee on Federal Assistance and Disaster-Related Funding investigatory meeting pursuant to the subpoena issued to Roil Soil Marketing’s Villanueva, Villanueva failed to answer questions posed by the Rep. Blas Jonathan “BJ” Attao (Ind-Saipan).

After refusing to answer questions, committee vice chair Rep. Edwin K. Propst (D-Saipan) and chair Rep. Ralph N. Yumul (Ind-Saipan) advised Villanueva that his failure to respond to the questions would subject him to contempt of the Legislature and prosecution by the attorney general.

Specifically, in response to the first question from Attao, which was, “Can you please tell us a little bit about your postsecondary educational background?” Villanueva reportedly replied with the phrase, “on the advice of my counsel, I respectfully invoke my Fifth Amendment privilege, therefore I respectfully decline to answer your question at this time.”

The probable cause document states that “Villanueva used that phrase eight times, refusing to answer the question

about postsecondary education asking for confirmation that Villanueva would be refusing to answer any of the questions.

After being admonished, he was again asked, “Do you have a degree or any certification in marketing or advertising?” Villanueva allegedly refused to answer.

Attao again asked, “Please share with us your professional credentials,” but Villanueva refused to answer.

Attao then asked, “What is Roil Soil and where is it physically located?” Villanueva also refused to testify.

Propst asked, “Are you unwilling to answer any of our questions that we are going to ask you from this point forward?” to which Villanueva replied, “I respectfully invoke my Fifth Amendment privilege, therefore I respectfully decline to answer your question.”

FOA invites public to magical music of Roman Rudnytsky

The Friends of the Arts welcomes internationally renowned classical pianist Roman Rudnytsky back to Saipan for another visit.

The FOA will sponsor two special concerts during Rudnytsky's visit—a rare opportunity to listen to live classical music played by a master pianist. The first concert was already held at the Saipan Community School on Beach Road last Saturday night, March 23. The second concert will be this Wednesday, March 27, at 7pm at the Grace Christian Academy. Both concerts are open to the public at no entrance charge, but voluntary donations will be accepted. The doors will open at 6:45pm and the concert will begin at 7pm.

The programs will include selections from such classical masters as Chopin, Ravel, Beethoven, Schubert, Debussy and other musical greats. Each concert will have different selections of music from the first concert last week.

Rudnytsky is an internationally active concert pianist of Ukrainian background whose frequent performances take him all over the world—to every continent and places

in-between. In addition to performances in capital cities and important musical centers, he often plays in places away from the musical mainstream, bringing the world and the pleasure of classical music to audiences that seldom experience this type of music in live performance. He has received much acclaim in the world's press and many repeat invitations.

A graduate of the famous Juilliard School in New York, he also did additional studies at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, Maryland and at master classes in Austria (the "Mozarteum") and Italy.

Since 1972, Rudnytsky has been a member of the piano faculty of the Dana School of Music at Youngstown State University in Youngstown, Ohio. He is a recipient of that institution's "Distinguished Professor Award" in recognition of his concert activities. He previously served on the piano faculties of the Indiana University School of Music (Bloomington, Indiana) and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory, in addition to being "artist-in-residence" at two Australian universities.

During his two-week visit

to Saipan, he will travel to many CNMI schools, playing and discussing music with the students. This is Rudnytsky's 13th trip to the CNMI. Rudnytsky travels at his own expense and donates

his time to the Community. The Friends of the Arts, with the help of sponsors from the Community, have hosted Rudnytsky's stay.

The FOA sponsors who make this visit possible are

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Rudnytsky

Cafeteria Workers (Supervisor) – BP2024-01 Saipan, CNMI

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Happy Covenant Day

to our cherished community!
May our shared agreements
continue to guide us.

FROM THE MANAGEMENT & STAFF OF




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Opinion

Hafa Adair

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EDITORIAL

Crushing freedom in Hong Kong: Beijing busts its pledge to leave the city alone

Forget daylight saving time; in Hong Kong (where they haven't used it in a very long while) it's not an hour early, but 23 years in the future, having already reached 2047. That is the year when the 50-year transition from British rule is to end.

During that period, until July 1, 2047, under the terms of the handover of the city from London to Beijing, "the laws currently in force in Hong Kong will remain basically unchanged."

The agreement between the U.K. and China also states that during the 50 years, "the current social and economic systems in Hong Kong will remain unchanged, and so will the life-style. Rights and freedoms, including those of the person, of speech, of the press, of assembly, of association, of travel, of movement, of correspondence, of strike, of choice of occupation, of academic research and of religious belief will be ensured by law."

But that was then. All those pretty words don't mean anything now as those "rights and freedoms" are tossed aside. The pledge to retain Hong Kong's liberties, including a free press, independent courts and its own government, didn't even last half of the promised half century.

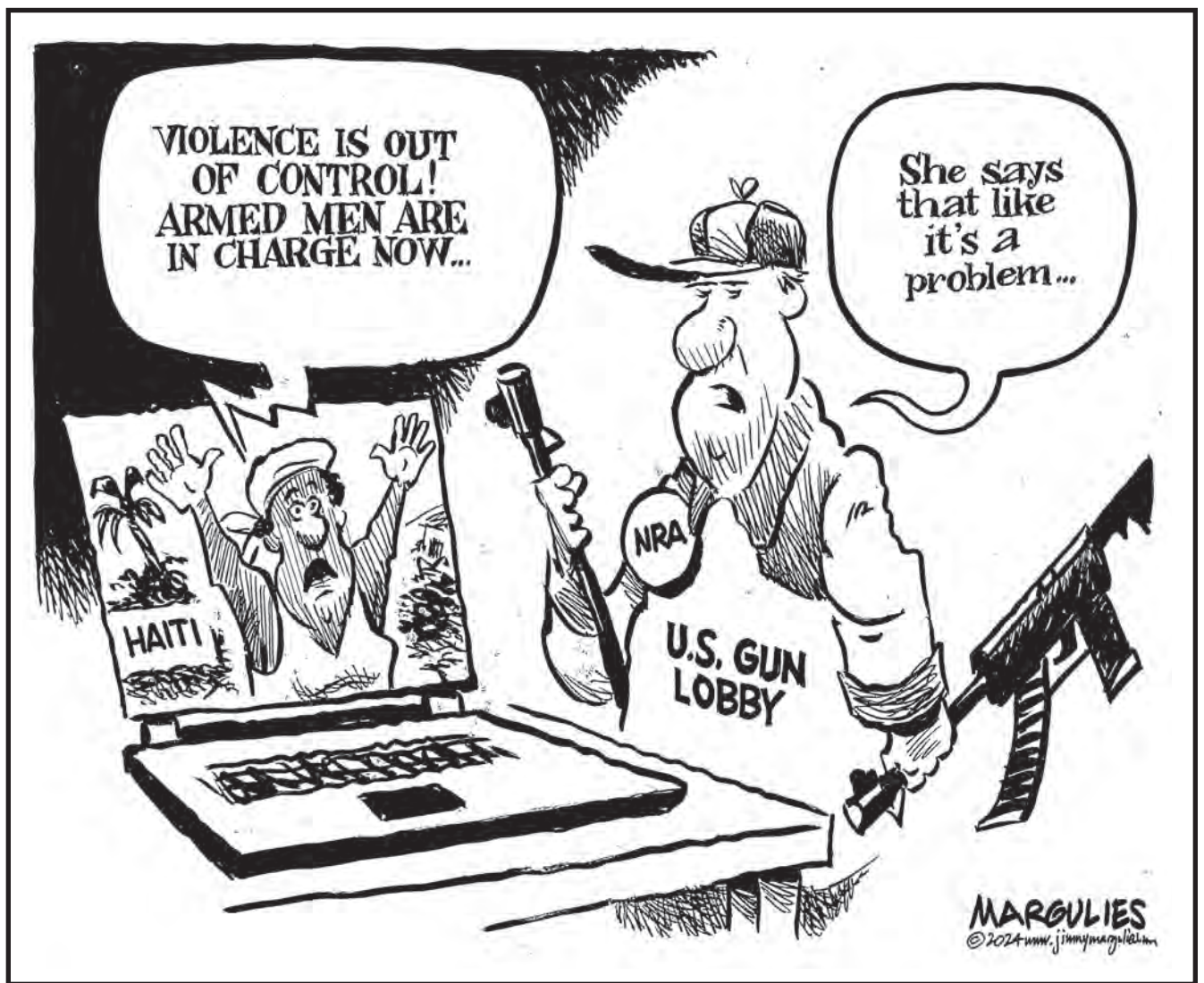
Four years ago, China's Maximum Leader Xi Jinping and his Communist Party, fed up with protests in Hong Kong, had their phony baloney Standing Committee of the National People's Congress unanimously pass the 1984-ish named Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, stripping city's citizens of their rights.

The next year, Beijing changed how elections are conducted in Hong Kong so that only "patriots" could hold public office. And so on Tuesday, Hong Kong's elected Legislative Council, now stacked exclusively with Beijing's stooges, passed the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance on a vote of 89-0. There is one vacancy in the council.

Having imposed tyranny on Hong Kong wasn't enough for Xi and the Politburo, they wanted their local puppets to do it as well. Do they actually believe that such unanimous staged votes illustrates anything but robotic control?

Jimmy Lai, publisher of Hong Kong's Apple Daily newspaper, would be calling all this out. That is if he wasn't thrown in prison and his newspaper wasn't seized by the government and shut down. The 2021 shuttering of the Apple Daily and its website came a year after Lai was arrested on some bogus charges. His trial began in December and is going on now. We are sure that he'll get a fair trial.

On the occasion of the July 1, 1997 handover of Hong Kong to China and the lowering of the Union Jack, we wrote that the barometer of China living up its promise of non-interference for the next 50 years would be "Hong Kong's vital and raucous free press" and "pressure on the press to conform to the party line will

See **CRUSHING** on Page 7

How should we read the texts of Purim and Passover this year?

By **JANE EISNER**
Los Angeles Times

Jane Eisner is the former editor in chief of the Forward, a national Jewish news outlet, and the former director of academic affairs at Columbia Journalism School. She is at work on a biography of Carole King.



In a few days, Jews will gather for the holiday of Purim and read aloud the Book of Esther. A month later, another gathering, another book—the Passover Haggadah. These ancient texts speak to us across the centuries, a conversation at once enlightening and fitful, bringing the past into the present in ways that are soothing but also discomfiting.

This year, I feel the discomfort acutely. Since Hamas launched its horrific massacre and hostage-taking on Oct. 7 and Israel retaliated in a brutal, ongoing war, the texts appear both prescient and agonizing, troubling as never before.

The Book of Esther and the Haggadah were written in response to trauma, which may have been historical or may have been mythical, but ultimately the difference between historicity and mythology doesn't matter here. Centuries of interpretation invite us to read the texts' words and the lessons through the lens of our own experiences and sensibilities—much the same way most Americans read the U.S. Constitution and other such foundational documents. We highlight what resonates for us, and deny or downplay the parts that make us cringe, but grappling with the text is very human. And very, very Jewish.

Purim falls on March 23 and 24 this year, when Jews memorialize what is generally regarded as a story of joyful triumph of good over evil. Esther, a beautiful maiden who hides her Jewish identity, becomes a favorite of a king and bravely uses her proximity to inform him that his henchman, Haman, wants to destroy her people. Coached by her uncle Mordechai, Esther prevails and Haman is destroyed instead of the Jews. This is a rare diasporic biblical text—the events take place in Persia (outside the Holy Land)—and it features a woman as the savior of an oppressed minority, able to summon the courage to move from powerlessness to power. God is not mentioned once in the Book of Esther; it is a story driven by human agency.

It resonates today in the heartbreaking aftermath of the Oct. 7 attack. If only an Esther could have prevented the massacre and kidnapping. If only an enlightened monarch could have stopped the rape and slaughter. Haman. Hitler. Hamas. All creepily entwined.

But as we relate to the victimhood, we need to also acknowledge and relate to the revenge taken by the Jews. The ninth chapter of the Book of Esther, often read quickly as if an afterthought, details a violent episode of state-sanctioned retaliation, when Jews murdered 75,000 Persian "enemies" including women and

children, and rejoiced afterward.

Not only was Haman executed, but at the request of Esther and with the acquiescence of the king, so were his ten sons. The text says that many Persians were so fearful of the newly militarized Jews that they professed to be Jews, too.

For centuries, rabbis and scholars have tried to justify this problematic spasm of violence. Maybe the death toll wasn't 75,000. Maybe women and children weren't killed—even though that was explicitly permitted. Maybe all this was necessary self-defense.

I find these rationalizations unsatisfying. The ninth chapter reads to me like a warning of the extremes a formerly oppressed people will go to when given a rare opportunity to exercise political and military might. It uncomfortably echoes the Israeli assault on Gaza today, with entire families obliterated, hunger and displacement rampant, thousands of children killed and orphaned, and cities all but destroyed. Does one trauma justify another? When does self-defense bleed into revenge? How is proportionality weighed during what is today an existential crisis for Israelis and Palestinians?

There is a similarly uncomfortable section of the Passover Haggadah, read each year at the Seder table. Its placement in the second half of the Haggadah—after the matzo ball soup, brisket and macaroons have been happily consumed—means that many Jews just skip it. But those who take the text seriously must grapple with the shfokh hamatka, a prayer that asks God to "pour out your wrath" against Israel's enemies. Whereas the vengeance sought at Purim is committed by humans, this prayer begs for divine retribution—more abstract and yet more potent—and it appears after the part of the Passover story where the Israelite slaves have been freed.

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EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Everyone wants to rein in Facebook, TikTok and other social media. This is one obvious solution

By ANIKA COLLIER NAVAROLI and ELLEN K. PAO
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Powerful technology has perhaps never presented a bigger set of regulatory challenges for the U.S. government. Before the state primary in January, Democrats in New Hampshire received robocalls playing AI-generated deepfake audio recordings of President Joe Biden encouraging them not to vote. Imagine political deepfakes that, say, incite Americans to violence. This scenario isn't too hard to conjure given new research from NYU that describes the distribution of false, hateful or violent content on social media as the greatest digital risk to the 2024 elections.

The two of us have helped develop and enforce some of the most consequential social media decisions in modern history, including banning revenge porn on Reddit and banning Trump on Twitter. So we've seen firsthand how well it has worked to rely entirely on self-regulation for social media companies to moderate their content.

The verdict: not well at all.

Toxic content abounds on our largely unregulated social media, which already helped foment the attempted insurrection at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, and the attempted coup in Brazil on Jan. 8, 2023. The dangers are only compounded with layoffs hitting the industry, the Supreme Court and Congress failing to address these issues head on, and inscrutable CEOs launching dramatic changes to their companies. Broad access to new and increasingly sophisticated technology for creating realistic deepfakes, such as AI-generated fake pornography of Taylor Swift, will make it easier to spread dupes.

The status quo of social media companies in the U.S. is akin to having an unregulated flight industry. Imagine if we didn't track flight times or delays or if we didn't record crashes and investigate why they happened. Imagine if we never found out about rogue pilots or passengers and those individuals were not blacklisted from future flights. Airlines would have less of an idea of what needs to be done and where the problems are. They would also face less accountability. The lack of social

media industry standards and metrics to track safety and harm has driven us to a race to the bottom.

Similar to the National Transportation Safety Board and Federal Aviation Administration, there should be an agency to regulate American technology companies. Congress can create an independent authority responsible for establishing and enforcing baseline safety and privacy rules for social media companies. To ensure compliance, the agency should have access to relevant company information and documents and the authority to hold noncompliant companies accountable. If or when things go awry, the agency should have the authority to investigate what happened, much as the transportation board can investigate Boeing after its recent mishaps.

Reining in social media harms is a difficult task. But we need to start somewhere, and attempts to ban platforms after they've already become hugely influential, as some U.S. lawmakers are trying to do with TikTok, just set up an unending game of whack-a-mole.

Platforms can track the number of accounts taken down, the number of posts removed and the reasons why those actions were taken. It also should be feasible to build a companywide database of the hidden but traceable device IDs for phones and IP addresses that have been used to commit privacy, safety and other rule violations, including links to the posts and activities that were the basis for the decision to catalog the person and device.

Companies should also share how algorithms are being used to moderate content, along with specifics on their safeguards to avoid bias (research indicates that, for example, automated hate speech detection shows racial bias and can amplify race-based harm). At minimum, companies would be banned from accepting payment from terrorist groups looking to verify social media accounts, as the Tech Transparency Project found X (formerly Twitter) to be doing.

People often forget how much content removal already happens on social media, including child pornography bans, spam filters and suspensions on individual accounts such as the one that tracked Elon Musk's private jet. Regulating these private

companies to prevent harassment, harmful data sharing and misinformation is a necessary, and natural, extension for user safety, privacy and experience.

Protecting users' privacy and safety requires research and insight into how social media companies work, how their current policies were written, and how their content moderation decisions have historically been made and enforced. Safety teams, whose members do the essential work of content moderation and hold vital insider knowledge, have recently been scaled back at companies such as Amazon, Twitter and Google. Those layoffs, on top of the rising number of people pursuing tech careers yet finding uncertainty in the private tech sector, leave numerous individuals on the job market with the skills and knowledge to tackle these issues. They could be recruited by a new agency to create practical, effective solutions.

Tech regulation is the rare issue that has bipartisan support. And in 2018, Congress created an agency to protect the cybersecurity of the government. It can and should create another regulatory agency to face threats from both legacy and emerging technologies of domestic and foreign companies. Otherwise we'll just keep experiencing one social media disaster after another.

Anika Collier Navaroli is a journalist, lawyer and senior fellow at the Tow Center for Digital Journalism at the Columbia Journalism School. She is also a former senior policy official at Twitter and Twitch. Ellen K. Pao is a tech investor and advocate, the former CEO of Reddit and a cofounder of the award-winning diversity and inclusion nonprofit Project Include.

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For centuries, Jews have been bothered by the shfokh hamat-kha, so much so that an alternative wording ("pour out your love") appears in some versions of the Haggadah. But just like the ninth chapter of Esther, this text gives voice to a malevolence in the Jewish tradition that makes me wince, spotlighting an unfortunate feature of human behavior, inviting us even today to beseech God to pursue and destroy our enemies.

And yet, as my friend Rabbi Richard Hirsh tells me, "Removing nasty things doesn't make the emotional impulses behind them go away. It just avoids them. The larger issue is, what do we do with the ugly stuff in our tradition? And not just our tradition. Is it better to read it, contextualize it, debate it? Or sidestep it and hope that nobody notices?"

Earlier in the Haggadah, there is the another disturbing account, drawn from the biblical book of Exodus, of the ten plagues God directed onto the Egyptians as a show of force to persuade the pharaoh to free the Israelites. But as the plagues are recited, a smidgen of wine is spilled for each one.

What I was always taught, what I believe today, is that we reduce our wine to diminish our own joy because of the suffering experienced by innocent Egyptians as God's punishment reaches a crescendo, before the pharaoh finally lets the people go.

This admonition to recognize the pain and destruction visited upon one's enemies and to temper our own sense of vindication is instructive, important—and even comforting. It demonstrates how these foundational texts give voice to our urge for vengeance and also provide a road map for empathy. In this, they are not simply stories from the past but necessary lessons for today.

CRUSHING

From page 6

be an ominous sign of Beijing's true intentions."

The Communists aren't even pretending. They are forcing the once free city to become a quiet drone following orders and staying in line. Freedom and liberty will be what the Party dictates. Anyone who complains, like Lai, will be dealt with.

As we've said before about other people, someday the Chinese will be free. And someday, Hong Kongers will be free again.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Restoring CPA-airline relations: Key to CNMI's economic revival

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is at a critical juncture, with the urgent task of revitalizing its economy through enhanced investment, tourism, and business development. Central to this challenge is the need to address the problematic relationship between the Commonwealth Ports Authority and the airlines, particularly concerning fees and services.

The CPA historically facilitated Airline Use Agreements that established fair service fees, a framework all airlines agreed to in 2007. However, the introduction of smaller aircraft by STAR Marianas Air in 2009, which did not require the full spectrum of CPA services, led to disputes. The CPA's failure to adhere to the 2007 AUA terms resulted in STAR Marianas paying fees under protest and subsequently taking legal action.

An independent review supported STAR Marianas' grievances regarding CPA's overcharges and failure to comply with the agreed terms. Rather than seeking a resolution, the CPA attempted to increase fees in 2017 through proposed AUA amendments, which were unanimously rejected by all signatory airlines serving the CNMI. In a unilateral move in 2021, the CPA terminated

the 2007 AUA, imposing higher fees through local regulations.

This approach by the CPA has led to further legal confrontations, culminating in a 2023 court ruling against the CPA for violating the 2007 AUA terms, a decision that was affirmed upon appeal in 2024. The CPA's persistent efforts to enforce exorbitant fees, despite judicial disapproval, highlight a concerning reluctance to collaborate and a fundamental misunderstanding of its responsibilities.

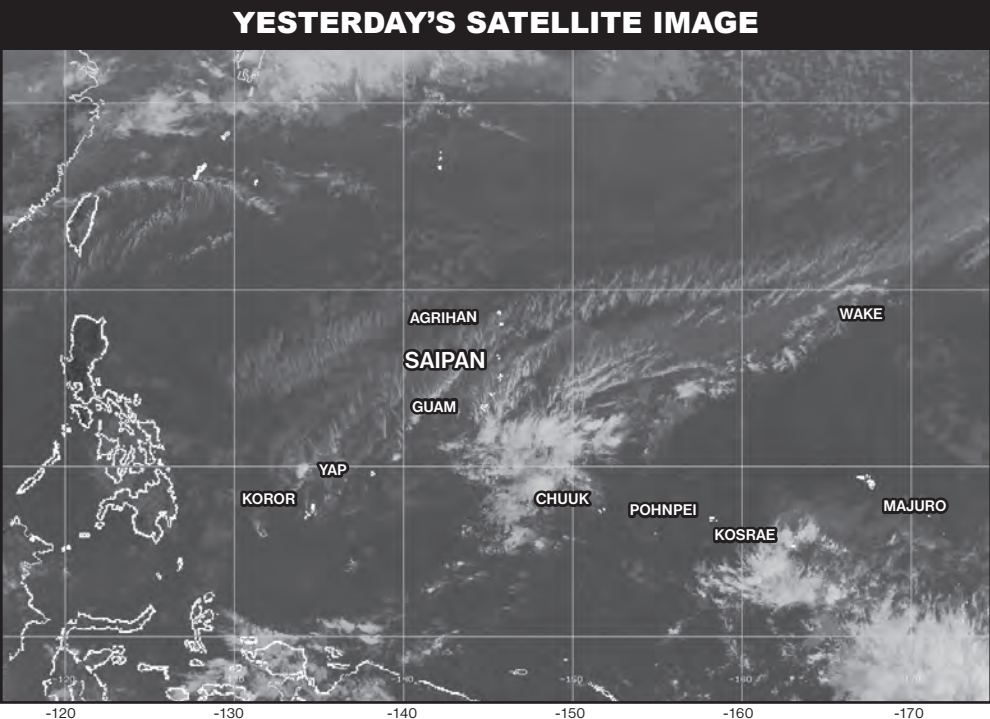
For the CNMI to successfully rejuvenate its economy, the CPA must revisit and respect the principles of the reasonable 2007 AUA. Reestablishing a cooperative relationship between the CPA and the airlines, as originally envisioned by the AUA, is essential. This step is not only crucial for resolving the current impasse but is also vital for fostering an environment conducive to commerce and travel, which are indispensable for the CNMI's economic recovery.

Shaun Christian
President, STAR Marianas Air, Inc.
San Jose, Tinian

“Reestablishing a cooperative relationship between the CPA and the airlines, as originally envisioned by the [Airline Use Agreements], is essential.”

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	
Breezy. Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 25 mph.		Breezy. Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 25 mph.		Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.		Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.		Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.	
85	76°	85	76°	85	76°	85	76°	85	75°



PICTURE TIME: 7:10 AM SUNDAY, MARCH 24, 2024

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Light showers and gustier winds will prevail today, as remnants of a shear line continue moving across the region. Various traveling buoys well outside the coastal waters indicate that the seas are 9 to 12 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: <https://www.weather.gov/gum/>

MICRONESIA			▲▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Cloudy	86° / 77°	
Palau	Rain Shower	87° / 81°	
Yap	Mostly Cloudy/Wind	88° / 79°	
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	88° / 81°	
Pohnpei	Mostly Cloudy	89° / 80°	
Kosrae	Light Rain/Wind	88° / 80°	
Majuro	Mostly Cloudy	86° / 82°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:17 AM	6:28 PM
Tuesday	6:16 AM	6:28 PM
Wednesday	6:16 AM	6:28 PM
Thursday	6:15 AM	6:28 PM
Friday	6:14 AM	6:28 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	6:08 AM	6:28 PM
Tuesday	-	6:40 AM	7:14 PM
Wednesday	-	7:14 AM	8:01 PM
Thursday	-	7:49 AM	8:51 PM
Friday	-	8:28 AM	9:44 PM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 1, 2024							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA076	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	Daily
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5	UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily	UA189	00:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6
UA193	7:50PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau	PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA183	7:55PM	9:50PM	Daily	UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
				UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
7C3403/2305	4:40AM	10:20PM	Daily	UA189/174	00:40AM	8:45AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA076/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam	UA192/174	10:40PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA076/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	UA184/174	10:55PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via Guam
				7C2306/3406	11:15PM	3:30PM+1	Daily
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	2:15AM	6:10AM	Daily	7C3462	08:00AM	1:30PM	Daily Feb 7-16 only
7C3403	4:40AM	8:35AM	Daily	7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily	TW307	7:45PM	1:15AM+1	Daily
				7C3404	10:15PM	3:35AM+1	Daily

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.					
FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 2, 2024					
SAIPAN TO ROTA					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	08:30	09:00	Daily
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	10:30	11:00	Daily
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	11:30	12:00	Saturday & Sunday
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:30	14:00	Monday To Friday
3104	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	11:30	12:00	Monday To Friday
GUAM TO ROTA					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	12:30	13:00	Monday To Friday
SAIPAN TO TINIAN					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1201	SAIPAN	TINIAN	7:30	7:45	Daily
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1206	SAIPAN	TINIAN	14:00	14:15	Daily
1207	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1209	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily
TINIAN TO SAIPAN					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2101	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2106	TINIAN	SAIPAN	14:30	14:45	Daily
2107	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2109	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

Saipan man odyssey: From US Army cop to Camp Blaz police major



US MARINES

Maj. John R. Lizama, newly promoted supervisory police officer with Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz, poses with family after his promotion to the rank of major on Naval Computer and Telecommunications Station, Guam, Feb. 27, 2024.

A Saipan native yearned for greater challenges with an unwavering conviction to help others. John R. Lizama, born and raised in Saipan, was recently hired as the operations officer due to his recognized efforts of dedicated service to Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz in Guam.

Every day, Lizama constantly maintains his advanced knowledge of law enforcement, physical security, and anti-terrorism measures to ensure the Provost Marshall Office enforcement agency fulfills its mission to safeguard all civilian, active-duty and veteran personnel. Lizama was not given the position he currently holds; he's earned promotions and awards with over 21 years of service—working diligently through high-stress and life endangering situations.

Lizama's career began in 2003. He started his law enforcement path in the civilian sector as an explosives K-9 handler with the Common-

wealth of the Northern Mariana Islands' Customs and Border Protection. His K-9 provided nose work for the detection of explosives.

Shortly after, he enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserves as a 31B Military Police Officer. As a dedicated soldier, he's traveled to different parts of the world; his deployments include Iraq, Kuwait, and Afghanistan. That, however, came with excessive deprivation.

"As I reflect on my journey within the Army Reserves, the evolution of my leadership style stands out," said Lizama. "Initially, the weight of responsibility weighed heavily on my shoulders, leading to a fear of losing team members—an understandable concern in the high-stakes environment of Afghanistan. However, I adapted and transformed. By fostering open communication with my team, I built trust and confidence. This shift allowed me to relinquish micro-man-

agement tendencies and focus on my own role effectively."

Although there were grim hardships with being a military police officer, he's learned to conquer numerous personal struggles and help others defeat their own uninvited opposing forces, strengthening his ability to be a reliable leader.

After completing his duties as a committed military police officer, he relocated to Guam and assumed the role of a Biological Science Technician Canine Handler for the U.S.

Department of Agriculture. In 2014, he transitioned to a civilian police officer position with the Department of Navy at Naval Base Guam. During his time at NBG, Lizama attained the rank of lead police officer (sergeant) within NBG Security. Afterwards, he accepted a position as a supervisory police officer for MCB Camp Blaz.

On Feb. 25, 2024, in the presence of his wife, son, colleagues, Guam policemen, and Camp Blaz personnel, Lizama pinned on gold oak

leaves to signal his new position as Supervisory Police Officer, Operations Major for the operations section of PMO.

"Having Mr. John Lizama work within PMO is a great opportunity for the military police unit here on Camp Blaz," said Master Gunnery Sgt. Brian N. Burgess, MCB Camp Blaz provost sergeant and native of Huntsville, Texas. "With his ties to the Army Reserves, it instills confidence that he is an experienced police officer and his experience in the region gives

us insight to better benefit the Guam community."

In addition to his new position, and as a testament to his work ethic, Lizama is currently responsible for serving as the Headquarters Platoon Sergeant and acts as the multinational exercise planner for his Army reserve police unit. With his time and service, Lizama has earned a Bronze Star, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Service Achievement Medal, and an Army Commendation Medal. (PR)

MEDICAL ASSISTANT- SDA-2024-02 Saipan, CNMI

MEDICAL ASSISTANT: THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST MISSION OF THE NMI dba: SAIPAN SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CLINIC, SAIPAN, CNMI

Must be able to perform administrative and certain clinical duties under the direction of a doctor. Administrative duties may include scheduling appointments, maintaining patients records, billing and coding information for billing and insurance purposes. Clinical duties may include taking and recording vital signs and medical histories, preparing patients who are put in general anesthesia and giving instructions before and after treatment administering medications under the direction of the doctors.

Minimum Requirements: High School Graduate, At least 12 months experience as medical healthcare assistant in a clinic or hospital setting.

Workplace: SDA DENTAL CLINIC QUARTER MASTER ROAD, CHALAN LAULAU VILLAGE, Saipan, CNMI

To apply: Please send your resume to SDA DENTAL CLINIC, PO BOX 500169, Saipan, MP 96950 or e-mail to accounting@saipansdadental.com **Job Number – SDA-2024-02**

SUPERVISOR RETAIL STORE - HS2024-02 Tinian, CNMI

SUPERVISOR RETAIL STORE, HUANG SHUN CORPORATION - Tinian, CNMI.

Provide customer service by greeting and assisting customers and responding to customer inquiries and complaints. Direct and supervise employees engaged in sales, inventory-taking, reconciling cash receipts, or in performing services for customers. Examine merchandise to ensure that it is correctly priced and displayed and that it functions as advertised. Monitor sales activities to ensure that customers receive satisfactory service and quality goods. Instruct staff on how to handle difficult and complicated sales. Assign employees to specific duties. Keep records of purchases, sales, and requisitions. Perform work activities of subordinates, such as cleaning and organizing shelves and displays and selling merchandise. Plan and prepare work schedules and keep records of employees' work schedules and time cards. Review inventory and sales records to prepare reports for management and budget departments. Inventory stock and reorder when inventory drops to a specified level. Establish and implement policies, goals, objectives, and procedures for the department. Examine products purchased for resale or received for storage to assess the condition of each product or item. Enforce safety, health, and security rules. Estimate consumer demand and determine the types and amounts of goods to be sold. Confer with company officials to develop methods and procedures to increase sales, expand markets, and promote business. Formulate pricing policies for merchandise, according to profitability requirements. Hire, train, and evaluate personnel in sales or marketing establishments, promoting or firing workers when appropriate. Plan and coordinate advertising campaigns and sales promotions and prepare merchandise displays and advertising copy. Establish credit policies and operating procedures. Plan budgets and authorize payments and merchandise returns. Will supervise 4 Cashier's.

Minimum Requirements: Minimum of 12 months experience in retail and wholesale accounting and operation.

Workplace: U-Save Market Building, Lot #014 T 22, San Jose Village, Tinian 96952 CNMI

To apply: Please send your resume to Huang Shun Corporation, PO BOX 520335, Tinian, MP 96952 or e-mail to tinianpopz@hotmail.com **Job Advertisement Number – HS2024-02**

COOK - BP2024-02 Saipan, CNMI

ONE (1) COOK, Allied Construction Corporation dba: Barny's Pizza., Saipan, CNMI

Cook that we are trying to employ will be working in a catering business serving in the cafeteria and will Assist in the preparation and cooking of scheduled meals. Follow direction from the kitchen supervisors in following standard recipe and procedure. Must maintain orderliness and cleanliness of preparation and cooking areas. Clean and sanitized counter tops, tables, tools and kitchen equipment. Cook foodstuffs according to menus, special dietary or nutritional restrictions, and numbers of portions to be served. Direct activities of one or more workers who assist in preparing and serving meals. Bake breads, rolls, and other pastries. Clean, cut, and cook meat, fish, and poultry. Compile and maintain records of food use and expenditures. Requisition food supplies based on estimates of future needs. Any other job requirement that maybe asked in the pre and post production of meals.

Minimum Requirements: High School Graduate plus 12 monthsexperience.

Workplace: TEXAS ROAD, BARNYS PIZZA BUILDING Susupe Village Saipan, CNMI.

To apply: Please send your resume to Barny's Pizza, PMB 55 Box 10001, Saipan, MP 96950 or e-mail to alliedspn@gmail.com **Job Number – BP2024-02**

DENTAL LABORATORY TECHNICIAN (DENTAL ASSISTANT)- SDA-2024-01 Saipan, CNMI

DENTAL LABORATORY TECHNICIAN (DENTAL ASSISTANT): THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST MISSION OF THE NMI dba: SAIPAN SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CLINIC, SAIPAN, CNMI

Assist in taking radiographs, probing readings and intraoral photos when needed. Set up trays with instruments for dentist and hygienist. Removing used trays from treatment room and sterilize prior to next patient. Primary Assistant Functions: Primary assistants are assigned to a specific dentist. Keep track of dentists schedule, to be sure he/she stays on schedule. Assist the dentist during a variety of treatment procedures. Keep track of the dentists specific supplies - bonding material, instruments, etc. Keep track of all of the dentists Lab cases. A log must be kept for each dentist. Monitor the TA box and take the chart as soon as possible. Communicate with the front office if running behind or a change in the dentists schedule. Request help if needed from other assistants or if the secondary assistant is unable to help. Leave (time off) should coincide with the specific dentists leave.

Minimum Requirements: High School Graduate, 12 months experience.

Workplace: SDA DENTAL CLINIC QUARTER MASTER ROAD, CHALAN LAULAU VILLAGE, Saipan, CNMI

To apply: Please send your resume to SDA DENTAL CLINIC, PO BOX 500169, Saipan, MP 96950 or e-mail to accounting@saipansdadental.com **Job Number – SDA-2024-01**

CIVIL ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN - HONGYE 2024-01 Saipan, CNMI

One (1) CIVIL ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN, HONG YE RENTAL & CONSTRUCTION, LTD., Saipan, CNMI

Apply theory and principles of civil engineering in planning, designing, and overseeing construction and maintenance of structures and facilities under the direction of engineering staff or physical scientists. Tasks include: Calculate dimensions, square footage, profile and component specifications, and material quantities using calculator or computer; read and review project blueprints and structural specifications to determine dimensions of structure or system and material requirements; draft detailed dimensional drawings and design layouts for projects and to ensure conformance to specifications; confer with supervisor to determine project details such as plan reparation, acceptance testing, and evaluation of field conditions; analyze proposed site factors and design maps, graphs, tracings, and diagrams to illustrate findings. Prepare reports and document project activities and data; report maintenance problems occurring at project site to supervisor and negotiate changes to resolve system conflicts; inspect project site and evaluate contractor work to detect design malfunctions and ensure conformance to design specifications and applicable codes; conduct materials test and analysis using tools and equipment and applying engineering knowledge; develop plans and estimate costs for installation of systems, utilization of facilities, or construction of structures; develop project budgets by estimating the cost of project activities; evaluate facility to determine suitability for occupancy and square footage availability and negotiate prices for new contracts or for modifications to existing contracts with contractors.

Minimum Requirements: Associate's degree in Engineering, or related field, foreign educational equivalent accepted, plus 24 months of related work experience; Must be knowledgeable in cost estimating, planning, scheduling, site inspection and familiarization of materials, methods and tools involved in construction or related.

Workplace: 3786 AFETNAS ROAD SAN ANTONIO, Saipan CNMI.

To apply: Please send your resume to Ace HONG YE RENTAL & CONSTRUCTION, LTD., PO BOX 502997, Saipan, MP 96950 or e-mail to hongye-mei@hotmail.com **Job Number – HONGYE-2024-01**

AS A FOOD SECURITY SOLUTION FOR GUAM

CNAS Aquapark at UOG eyes viability of aquaponics



UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

Joshua Muna, a research assistant with UOG Sea Grant, guides a Farm-to-Table Guam beginning farmers group through the new CNAS Aquapark on March 15. The facility is available for tours and class field trips and projects by appointment.

An aquaponics park has been reopened on the University of Guam campus by the College of Natural & Applied Sciences. Named the CNAS Aquapark, it will be used for agricultural education, research, and community outreach—the college's three missions as facilitator of Guam's Land Grant.

The park made its debut at the university's Charter Day on March 7. It will facilitate aquaculture research projects and will also serve as an educational venue for students and teachers, farmers, and the community to learn how aquaponics systems work and why they are a smart solution for Guam's environment and food security.

"In light of Typhoon Mawar last year and the COVID pandemic before that, we have been reminded how vulnerable Guam is when it comes to food security," said Dr. Adrian Ares, interim associate director of WPTRC. "Aquaponics



UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

Aquaculture specialist David Crisostomo transfers seedlings to the newly opened CNAS Aquapark—a Land Grant-funded aquaponics research, instruction, and outreach facility on the University of Guam campus.

makes practical sense for an isolated island, and it is critical that we more firmly establish it into Guam's approach to food production."

Aquaponics systems produce both plants and fish as food. They make efficient use of space and resources by recirculating water—taking organic waste from the fish

and providing it to plants as a fertilizer. The plants, in turn, remove these nutrients and return clean water to the fish. Aquaponics systems use 90% less water than traditional agriculture and also reduce the risk of pesticides leaching into the aquifer.

Located behind the Agriculture & Life Sciences Build-



UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

Dr. Rachael Leon Guerrero, dean of the College of Natural & Applied Sciences and director of the Western Pacific Tropical Research Center and UOG Cooperative Extension & Outreach, and Dr. Adrian Ares, interim associate director for WPTRC, on March 12 in the newly opened CNAS Aquapark on the University of Guam campus.

ing on the UOG campus, the aquapark was originally created around 20 years ago by David Crisostomo, who received a limited term grant as UOG Cooperative Extension & Outreach faculty.

"Past experiences in aquaculture and agricultural production in Guam have proven that we are capable of producing much more food locally than is currently being produced," Crisostomo said. "Environmental stewardship and global climate issues also justify the need to examine alternative production strategies."

The aquapark's revamp in the last three years—including a new fence, reinstalled water and power, added gravel, and mitigated weeds—was funded by \$120,000 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture through the Western Pacific Tropical Research Center under CNAS.

Research in the park is underway. A USDA Hatch grant-funded project is ex-

ploring three different aquaponics setups for affordability, rate of return, and durability in Guam's climate in an effort to increase the use of aquaponics both commercially and privately on island. The systems are stocked with tilapia from the

university's Guam Aquaculture Development & Training Center and are growing six types of lettuce. The researchers will be assessing different crops and different species of fish.

The grant is being overseen by WPTRC fisheries scientist Dr. Hui Gong Jiang with Crisostomo as co-project director in his role now as an aquaculture specialist with UOG Sea Grant.

"We feel the impact will be significant," Crisostomo said. "Although the Triton Farm [aquaponics demonstration system] has been operating for more than 20 years, the adoption rate has been small," he said, which suggests that economic issues, like cost and rate of return, may be a barrier.

The CNAS Aquapark is available for tours and class field trips and projects by appointment. Crisostomo is also available to provide assistance to interested farmers and businesses. Those interested can call (671) 727-5655. (UOG)



UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

Johnny Borja, an associate with UOG Sea Grant, shows children visiting the University of Guam for Charter Day the tilapia tanks in the new CNAS Aquapark on March 7. The park has been restored to be used as an aquaculture research facility as well as an educational venue for students, farmers, and the community to learn about aquaponics why it is a smart solution for the environment and food security.

GCC celebrates bus driving bootcampers

Guam Community College celebrated 12 individuals for successfully completing the Bus Driving III Bootcamp on Wednesday, March 20, 2024. All completers are now gainfully employed by this bootcamp employer sponsors.

"The partnership that we have, not just with government agencies, but with each and every one of these students is vital for us to continue eco-development here [in] Guam," said Dr. Mary A. Y. Okada, GCC president. "With GCC being the leader of career and technical education helps to support that [development] by providing the services and the training for individuals to advance. If you are already or currently employed, hopefully you get that next promotion by getting this certification

you just recently received, or if you are not employed, we hope that we have been able to help you open up that opportunity for you."

The completers earned their Class "D" Licenses for bus driving (hands-on instruction) along with certifications in Passenger Assistance, Heartsaver First Aid CPR AED, Work Ethic, OSHA 10, and WorkKeys. In addition to completing the bootcamp, participants hired by the Government of Guam completed one year of on-site work experience to fulfill job eligibility requirements.

Guam Department of Labor deputy director Gerard Toves shared his appreciation of GCC's bootcamps at the ceremony on Wednesday. "Thank you for being a huge



GCC

Guam Community College's Bus Driving III Bootcamp completers pose for a group photo during a ceremony last Wednesday.

part of our community in receiving these certifications," said Toves. "These folks right here...whatever life threw at them they still kept on coming. From the bottom of my teams'

hearts, thank you so much for completing. You are now a total asset with our community. Please share with others about the bootcamps that GCC has coming up," he added.

The Bootcamp employer sponsors were the Guam Department of Public Works, Guam Regional Transit Authority, and Kloppenburg Enterprises, Inc. GCC also

recognizes the Guam Department of Labor and the Dededo Mayor's Office for their continued support of GCC Bootcamps such as Bus Driving. (PR)

World

WORLD BRIEFS

130 dead, 4 arrested in attack on Moscow concert hall
MOSCOW (AP)—The suburban Moscow music hall where gunmen opened fire on concertgoers was a blackened, smoldering ruin Saturday as the death toll in the attack surpassed 130 and Russian authorities arrested four suspects. President Vladimir Putin claimed they were captured while fleeing to Ukraine. Kyiv strongly denied any involvement in Friday's assault on the Crocus City Hall music venue in Krasnogorsk, and the Islamic State group's Afghanistan affiliate claimed responsibility. Putin did not mention IS in his speech to the nation, and Kyiv accused him and other Russian politicians of falsely linking Ukraine to the assault to stoke fervor for Russia's war in Ukraine, which recently entered its third year. U.S. intelligence officials confirmed the claim by the IS affiliate. "ISIS bears sole responsibility for this attack. There was no Ukrainian involvement whatsoever," National Security Council spokeswoman Adrienne Watson said in a statement.

UN chief says it's time to 'truly flood' Gaza with aid and calls starvation there an outrage
RAFAH CROSSING, Egypt (AP)—U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres stood near a long line of waiting trucks Saturday and declared it was time to "truly flood Gaza with lifesaving aid," calling the starvation inside the enclave a "moral outrage." He urged an immediate cease-fire between Israel and Hamas. Guterres spoke on the Egyptian side of the border not far from the southern Gaza city of Rafah, where Israel plans to launch a ground assault despite widespread warnings of a potential catastrophe. More than half of Gaza's population has taken refuge there. "Any further onslaught will make things even worse—worse for Palestinian civilians, worse for hostages and worse for all people in the region," Guterres said. He spoke a day after the U.N. Security Council failed to reach consensus on the wording of a U.S.-sponsored resolution supporting "an immediate and sustained cease-fire." Guterres repeatedly noted the difficulties of getting aid into Gaza, for which international aid agencies have largely blamed Israel. "Here from this crossing, we see the heartbreak and heartlessness ... a long line of blocked relief trucks on one side of the gates, the long shadow of starvation on the other," he said. About 7,000 aid trucks are waiting in Egypt's North Sinai province to enter Gaza, Gov. Mohammed Abdel-Fadeil Shousha said in a statement.

Biden signs \$1.2 trillion funding package after Senate's early-morning passage ended shutdown threat
WILMINGTON, Del. (AP)—President Joe Biden on Saturday signed a \$1.2 trillion package of spending bills after Congress had passed the long overdue legislation just hours earlier, ending the threat of a partial government shutdown. "This agreement represents a compromise, which means neither side got everything it wanted," Biden said in a statement. "But it rejects extreme cuts from House

Republicans and expands access to child care, invests in cancer research, funds mental health and substance use care, advances American leadership abroad, and provides resources to secure the border. ... That's good news for the American people." It took lawmakers six months into the current budget year to get near the finish line on government funding, the process slowed by conservatives who pushed for more policy mandates and steeper spending cuts than a Democratic-led Senate or White House would consider. The impasse required sev-

eral short-term spending bills to keep agencies funded. The White House said Biden signed the legislation at his home in Wilmington, Delaware, where he was spending the weekend. It had cleared the Senate by a 74-24 vote shortly after funding had expired for the agencies at midnight. But the White House had sent out a notice shortly after the deadline announcing that the Office of Management and Budget had ceased shutdown preparations because there was a high degree of confidence that Congress would pass the legislation and the Democratic presi-

dent would sign it Saturday.

Heavy rains kill at least 7 in Rio de Janeiro state, 4-year-old rescued after 16 hours under mud
PETROPOLIS, Brazil (AP)—Heavy rains in Rio de Janeiro state have killed at least seven people, authorities said Saturday, while a 4-year-old girl was rescued after more than 16 hours under mud. The girl was pulled out alive in the city of Petropolis, 69 kilometers (43 miles) north of Rio. Rescue teams had to stop their work Friday night because of risks

of new landslides in the region. The girl's father died as a house was knocked to the ground. She survived because he protected her with his body, members of rescue teams said. Three more people died in the same place. "My son was a warrior, he spent all that time there and saved his little daughter," Roberto Napoleão, the grandfather of the girl, told journalists. "You can't imagine what it is like to lose a son. It hurts so much." Mayors in the state and Gov. Claudio Castro had alarmed residents of potential problems for the weekend since Thursday.



PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

INVITATION TO BID
ITB24-CHCC/CGC-PMHCA-010

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: APRIL 18th, 2024 TIME: 10:00AM (CHST)


"PROCUREMENT OF VEHICLE"

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD THIS INVITATION TO BID FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.HEALTH]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS TAB ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF IT DOES SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORA P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
COMMONWEALTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

P.O. BOX 502149, Saipan MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-6245 | Fax: (670) 235-7147 • Website: www.developcnmi.com

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
2024-CEDA-04-RFP

Closing Date: Monday, April 1, 2024 Time: 4:00 p.m.

"FINANCIAL AND COMPLIANCE AUDIT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023"


Copies of the proposal package may be picked up at the Commonwealth Economic Development Authority office, at 2390 Beach Road Oleai Unit 205, Saipan, during regular working hours, Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays, or on our website at www.developcnmi.com

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIC SECTIONS 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reject any and all bids and proposals in whole or in part, and to waive any imperfection in a proposal in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All proposals shall become the property of the CNMI government.


/S/ MANUEL A. SABLAN
Executive Director

/S/ BRIEN S. NICHOLAS JR.
Acting Director
Division of Procurement Services



COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950 |
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
Website: www.cnmiports.com



NOTICE OF INVITATION FOR BID
Automated Teller Machine
FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Project No.: CPA-IFB-006-24
CPA Concession No.: SAT-2024-01

Notice is hereby given that the Commonwealth Ports Authority (the "CPA") is accepting sealed bids, subject to the terms and conditions of the Invitation for Bid (the "IFB"), and other contract provisions, for bids from firms, companies, and/or corporations to provide Automated Teller Machine at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

The IFB will be issued and available for pick-up beginning March 15, 2024, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, at the Accounting Office, 2nd Floor, Departure Building, Saipan International Airport. CPA offices are closed on its austere days and holidays. The IFB includes a layout and requirements. All responses to this IFB shall also take into account any and/or all costs that will be charged to the bidder awarded the contract for the project. Prospective bidders will be required to pay an administrative fee of \$100.00 for costs associated with handling and consideration of the bid.

Questions and/or clarification concerning this project shall be in writing and sent to the attention of the Executive Director through email at cpadmin@cpa.com with copy to Joy Ann Tenorio at joy.tenorio@cnmiports.com no later than April 2, 2024.

All bids shall be sealed and marked on the cover package outside as follows: **"INVITATION FOR BID SUBMISSION: CONFIDENTIAL, AUTOMATED TELLER MACHINE SERVICES, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY CPA-IFB-006-24."** One (1) original and two (2) copies of the bid must be submitted no later than **3:00 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time, April 18, 2024**, to the Authority Administration Section, Office of the Executive Director, 2nd Floor, Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport.

Bids will be opened on April 18, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. at the Meeting Room, Saipan International Airport. Bids are not required to include a prepaid minimum concession fee. The concessions are for the right to provide Automated Teller Machine services at a certain designated location within the Saipan International Airport for a period of five (5) years and requires the concessionaire to operate such concession to the satisfaction of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so, would be in CPA's best interest. CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said bids if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest. All bids shall become property of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY


LEO B. TUDELA
Executive Director

Date



NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhc.gov.net
Tels: (670) 234-9447 / 234-6866 / 234-7670 • Fax: (670) 234-9021



PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

NMHC hereby publicly discloses that on December 7, 2023, Jesse Aldan Deleon Guerrero, Jr., an immediate family member of Leilani Nicole A. Manibusan of NMHC, applied for assistance under the HOME Program.


Said applicant has been determined to be a member of a group or class of low-income persons intended to be beneficiaries of the assisted activity and is applying to receive generally the same benefits being made available to the group or class. Ms. Leilani Nicole A. Manibusan is not and shall not be involved in the handling of this loan application.

NMHC discloses this possible conflict pursuant to 24 CFR 92.356 in order to allow any interested persons to comment before the application is considered for an exception under the applicable HOME Program conflict regulations. Any comments should be submitted to NMHC on or before April 9, 2024.

Dated this 22nd day of March, 2024.


/S/ JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

"NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency"



COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
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Website: www.cnmiports.com



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS
FOR CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES

PORT OF SAIPAN CPA OFFICE LEAK REPAIRS
PROJECT NO. CPA-SS-001-22

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is a public corporation and autonomous agency of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). In accordance with its Procurement Rules and Regulations, CPA hereby seeks the services of qualified consulting firms to provide Construction Management Services for the Office Leak Repairs at the Captain George F. Fleming Memorial Building at the Port of Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, Project No. CPA-SS-001-22.

The project is being funded by the CPA and is in accordance and compliance with CPA's Procurement Rules and Regulations, Section 40-50-202, Architect-Engineer Design and Construction Management Services.

The Request for Qualification (RFQ) Package is available at CPA's Administration Office, 2nd floor of the arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. No fee is required for obtaining the RFQ package. Electronic copies may be made available upon written request to Ms. Wendi L. Prater at wprater@cnmiports.com or Ms. Sheri N. Llagas at receptionist@cnmiports.com.

Questions regarding this RFQ must be submitted to Ms. Prater, CPA's Executive Assistant/Project Manager, via email to wprater@cnmiports.com or hand delivered to the CPA Administration Office, by no later than **5:00 p.m. CHST, Wednesday, March 13, 2024**.


The statements of professional qualification will be evaluated based on the criteria available in the RFQ package.

Interested Consultants are requested to submit one (1) original, four (4) copies and one (1) electronic version in .pdf of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **5:00 p.m. CHST, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 2024**. Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.


/s/ LEO B. TUDELA
Executive Director

Date: February 14, 2024



NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhc.gov.net
Tels: (670) 234-9447 / 234-6866 / 234-7670 • Fax: (670) 234-9021



PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

NMHC hereby publicly discloses that on October 24, 2023, **Kimberly Apatang Acebo**, an immediate family member of **David Mundo Apatang**, Lt. Governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, applied for assistance under the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Housing Program.

Said applicant has been determined to be a member of a group or class of individuals who meet the national objective of urgent need and are intended to be beneficiaries of the assisted activity and is applying to receive generally the same benefits being made available to the group or class. Lt. Governor, David M. Apatang, is not and shall not be involved in the handling of this grant application.

NMHC discloses this possible conflict pursuant to 24 CFR 92.356 in order to allow any interested persons to comment before the application is considered for an exception under the applicable conflict regulations.

Written comments may be faxed to Fax No.: (670) 234-9451, mailed to P.O. Box 500514 Saipan, MP 96950, or emailed to cnmi-cdbg-dr@nmhc.gov.net on or before **March 25, 2024**.

Dated this 11th day of March, 2024.

/s/
JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

Life & Style

Kate, Princess of Wales, reveals she has cancer; undergoing chemotherapy

LONDON (AP)—Kate, the Princess of Wales, has cancer and is undergoing chemotherapy, she revealed Friday in a stunning announcement that followed weeks of speculation about her health and whereabouts.

The princess disclosed her condition in a video message recorded Wednesday in Windsor and broadcast Friday. It came after relentless speculation on social media ever since January, when she was hospitalized for unspecified abdominal surgery.

Kate asked for “time, space and privacy” while she is treated for an unspecified type of cancer that was discovered after what she described as “major” surgery.

Wearing a casual striped sweater and jeans, Kate sat on a wooden bench in front of a lawn dotted with daffodils. The flowers, which bloom in early spring, are often used as a symbol of hope for people fighting cancer.

“I am well,” she said. “I am getting stronger every day by focusing on the things that will help me heal.”

Kate, 42, hadn’t been seen publicly since Christmas until video surfaced this week



This screengrab taken from a video released by the BBC Studios on Friday March 22, 2024, shows Britain’s Kate, the Princess of Wales recording her message announcing that following her abdominal surgery in January “tests after the operation found cancer had been present.”

of her with her husband, Prince William, heir to the throne. It showed them walking from a shop that sells produce grown on the royal family’s Windsor estate.

The news is another jolt for the royal family since the an-

nouncement last month that King Charles III was being treated for an unspecified type of cancer that was discovered while undergoing a procedure for a benign enlarged prostate.

Charles said he is “so proud of Catherine for her courage in

speaking as she did,” according to a statement released by Buckingham Palace. The king, who received prostate treatment in the same hospital and at the same time Kate had her surgery, remained in the “closest contact with his beloved daughter-in-law” in the past weeks.

The king and Queen Camilla “will continue to offer their love and support to the whole family through this difficult time,” the palace said.

Prince Harry and his wife Meghan, who have been estranged from William and Kate since their move to California in 2020, wished the princess well.

“We wish health and healing for Kate and the family, and hope they are able to do so privately and in peace,” they said in a statement.

Before Friday, Kensington Palace had given little detail about Kate’s condition beyond saying it wasn’t cancer-related, the surgery was successful and recuperation would keep the princess away from public duties until April. Kate said it had been thought that her condition was non-cancerous until post-surgery tests revealed the diagnosis.

“This of course came as a huge shock, and William and I have been doing everything we can to process and manage this privately for the sake of our young family,” she said.

By choosing to speak directly to the country and the world about her condition, rather than issuing a statement through the palace, Kate offered a level of intimacy

and transparency atypical of a member of the royal family and may help tamp down runaway conjecture. The king’s disclosure of his condition was also notably open by royal standards.

Kate said it had taken her time to recover from the surgery before starting “preventative” treatment, which she said was in the early stages.

Dr. Shivan Sivakumar, associate professor in oncology at the University of Birmingham, said it’s unclear what the princess meant by “preventative” chemotherapy but he presumed that it’s what is known as “adjuvant” chemotherapy in the medical profession.

“This is chemotherapy after an operation to prevent recurrence,” he said. “This is to attempt to destroy any circulating cancer cells.”

Kate said it has been “an incredibly tough couple of months” for her family. She said it had taken time to tell her three children Prince George, Princess Charlotte and Prince Louis in a way “appropriate for them” and reassure them she will be OK.

The announcement came after the start of the Easter holidays, which will shield the children from media coverage of the news.

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said in a statement that Kate “has shown tremendous bravery.”

“We are incredibly sad to hear of the news,” said White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre, who opened her briefing with reporters moments after news of cancer treatment broke. “We are taking this in, this terrible news, as all of you are.”

Cameron Diaz and Benji Madden announce birth of baby boy

Actress Cameron Diaz and her musician husband, Benji Madden, say they are “blessed and grateful” to have welcomed a baby boy—Cardinal Madden—to their family.

The couple announced the arrival of their son in an Instagram post they each shared Friday.

“He is awesome and We are all so happy he is here! For the kids safety and privacy we

won’t be posting any pictures,” said a caption on the post, adding that Cardinal is “really cute.”

“We are feeling so blessed and grateful,” said the post, which included an illustration with the words, “A little bird whispered to me.”

Diaz and Madden also used Instagram to announce the birth of a daughter, Raddix, in 2020. They said at that time

they didn’t plan to share more photos or details, in order to protect their family’s privacy.

Diaz, whose films include “There’s Something About Mary” and “Charlie’s Angels,” married Madden, a member of the band Good Charlotte, in early 2015.

Representatives for Diaz and Madden did not immediately respond to emailed requests for comment. (AP)

Intense emotions accompany arrival of early menopause

DEAR ABBY: I am 34 and recently found out I have started menopause. I knew it might come early for me because most of the women in my family began in their 30s and were done by 50. I have no biological children and now probably never will. I guess I waited too long for the right time, the right person, etc. I was always careful to use birth control when I became sexually active and never left it up to my partner.

I am now having a hard time coping with this feeling of loss. I know I shouldn’t be grieving something I never had, but I find myself tearing up thinking about it. I’m angry at myself for missing out on it. I have been married to a wonderful man for almost two years, but we have been together for 10. I wanted to be married and financially stable before having children.

I feel like I’m being punished. My poor husband takes the brunt of my frustrations and anger, which isn’t fair, and I apologize when it happens, but I find myself slowly drifting into isolation because of it. I don’t know what to do anymore. I’m sad, angry, frustrated and empty. I wish I had an answer or anyone who understands to just hear me. Any advice?

GRIEVING IN OREGON

DEAR GRIEVING: Your feelings are understandable. It’s time to seek counseling for help to stop blaming your-

self or your husband and cope with your feelings of sadness, anger and frustration. Once that is done, it may be time to consider your options for fulfilling your maternal instincts. These include fostering, adoption, surrogacy and volunteer mentoring. Please consider them.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Three years ago, I discovered I was being excluded by my co-workers. I have tried to not let it bother me, but it’s starting to wear me down emotionally. I work in a dental office with a staff of seven women. I have worked with two of them for almost 20 years, and I always thought we had a friendship because we would go to lunch together and occasionally do things outside of work.

Three years ago, I learned they have a group chat with two of the other women and have gotten together outside of work and didn’t include me. What bothers me most is they laugh and talk in front of me about the funny memes and videos they send each other.

I’m tired of being excluded, and I don’t understand why they have done it. We all get along, so I’m not sure why this is happening. Any advice on what I should say or do?

APART IN ILLINOIS

DEAR APART: Folks are entitled to socialize (or not) with

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



anyone they would like after work. However, to treat you the way they have been seems insensitive, bordering on rude, and you have every right to say so the next time it happens. It may lead to a “difficult” discussion, but you have a right to tell them how it affects you. Do not depend upon your co-workers to be personal friends, which may not be possible. I encourage you to cultivate social relationships outside the office from now on.

■ ■ ■

To receive a collection of Abby’s most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

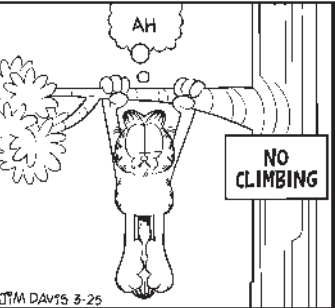
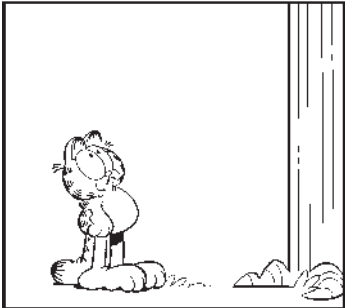
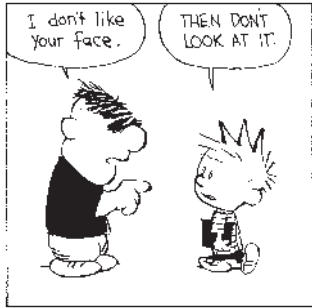
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

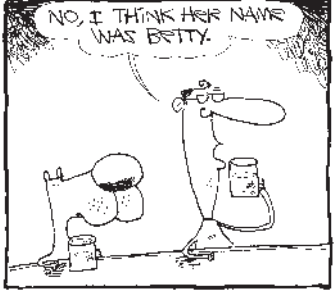
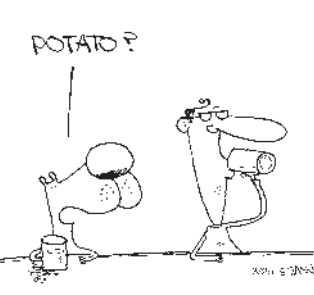
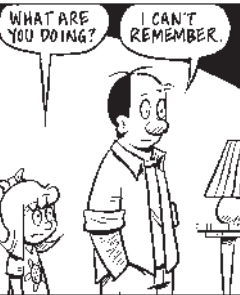


Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Deeds

5 Up to

8 Muffin choice

12 Sneaker tie

14 Greek vowel

15 "Press on!"

16 Swiss-born painter Paul

17 TV schedule abbr.

18 Puts on a happy face

20 Entices

23 Thor's father

24 Formerly, once

25 Audio streaming service

28 PC key

29 Anticipate

30 Trail the pack

32 Warm weather area

34 Yard tool

35 Historic periods

36 "Untrue!"

37 Nabob

40 Prattle

41 Life story?

42 Hurry

47 Big name in scat

48 Childish

49 Crystal gazer

50 McCourt memoir

51 Classic R&B record label

MUSIC FOR SEVEN

4 Music for seven

5 "Toodledo!"

6 Here, in Dijon

7 "I'm game!"

8 Two-piece suit

9 Sandwich bread

10 Suit to —

11 Burnsian denials

13 "CSI" settings

19 Baseball glove

20 Salonga of "Miss Saigon"

21 Web addresses

22 Queue after Q

23 October birthstones

25 Worries too much

26 Level

27 Tibetan herd

29 "East of Eden" girl

31 Earth (Pref.)

33 Sweet drink

34 High-tech workers?

36 Wine valley

37 Nemeses

38 Competent

39 Scrabble piece

40 Jewels

43 Texter's "I didn't need to know that!"

44 Fanatic

45 Writer Levin

46 Cowboy's nickname

Solution time: 21 mins.

11 A I I T R I P P E A L

12 E I E O N A A L M A

13 R E D C R O S S R B I S

14 O H M S I S A R S

15 U L N A E B R I E

16 S U I T R A C F G A R S

17 S L S A L A D D V I

18 R U M C A K E S S V F N

19 R U F S S O A R S

20 C A S C L U P I N

21 D R N D R Y D E R C U P

22 E G A L M E O W E R A

23 N O P E S A N S D I D

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jenny Slate, 42; Sarah Jessica Parker, 59; Marcia Cross, 62; Elton John, 77.

Happy Birthday: Let your energy and enthusiasm lead the way. Your ability to arouse curiosity in those you encounter will put you in a leadership position. Take advantage of opportunities that show promise and offer a positive lifestyle change. Nurture relationships and you'll get the support to turn your ideas into something tangible. Your happiness depends on following your heart and dreams. Your numbers are 7, 18, 21, 23, 33, 39, 46.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You don't have to use force to get what you want. Truth and fairness will count when trying to win favors or approval. Thoroughness and preparation will make or break you. Don't count on others to handle responsibility. Personal gains and partnerships are favored.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't fear change. Envision your goal and make it happen. Be the driving force and join groups that have something to contribute. It's OK to do things your way and to take a different path to reach your destination. Choose the journey that makes you feel alive.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Focus less on what others are doing and more on yourself. You'll learn something valuable if you take a course or participate in an event that requires you to rely on your skills and experience. An encounter will bring back memories. Proceed with caution.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Keep your thoughts to yourself and avoid opposition. What you do will have a more

significant impact than what you say. Do the best job possible, and you'll feel good and impress onlookers. A positive adjustment will be directly linked to a change in routine.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Think and do for yourself. If someone tries to take over, don't move aside. Own your space, ideas and the outcome. Your creative inspiration will set you apart and motivate you to go further. Personal and financial gain depends on you.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Review documents and finances, and move on to activities that require sustainability, focus and motivation. A connection you make will spark your curiosity and offer alternatives that make your life better. Update your look.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Put your time and effort into your surroundings and make things more functional. Convenience is everything when it comes to a tight schedule. Share your heartfelt thoughts and ideas, and be willing to put muscle behind your intentions and finish what you start.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Pay attention, and you'll recognize an opportunity you want to take advantage of. Settle into a routine and align yourself with someone who shares your concerns. Take the high road and use experience and presentation, not force, to reach your goal. Personal improvement is on the rise.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't fool yourself into thinking someone stroking your ego has good intentions. Take a moment to clarify what's at stake and how to use your experience, knowledge and intelligence to get what you want and when. Be

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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the take-charge person, not the follower. CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Think before you speak. Refrain from irritating someone you must deal with to finish things on time. Change and opportunity go together. Be accommodating and willing to do your part, and you'll gain respect and feel grateful for what transpires.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Explore the possibilities, costs and requirements before you start something new. Don't let an emotional situation interfere with taking advantage of an opportunity. Strive for perfection, speed and adaptability, and the outcome will take you on a journey filled with memorable moments.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Use intelligence and be resourceful when dealing with joint ventures or investments dependent on something or someone you cannot control. Look for unique opportunities that align with what you know and do best. Don't venture into unknown territory.

Birthday Baby: You are intuitive, proactive and emotional. You are ambitious and persuasive.

• Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. • You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. • Focus and you'll reach your goals. • Aim high; start new projects. • Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

			3	1		8					
9			3								
1	8		4		9		5	7			
6	1	7				4					
3		9	8	4	7				6		
	2	8	9			5	7				
8	3				2				4		
7				9	4	2	3				
2		4				6					

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

6	5	8	2	4	7	1	9	3
9	2	1	5	6	3	8	4	7
4	7	3	1	9	8	6	2	5
2	8	7	6	5	9	4	3	1
3	9	5	8	1	4	7	6	2
1	6	4	7	3	2	5	8	9
7	3	6	9	8	1	2	5	4
5	4	2	3	7	6	9	1	8
8	1	9	4	2	5	3	7	6

Difficulty: ★ 3/25 ©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

Solution: 10 letters

N	T	W	O	B	N	I	A	R	E	Y	A	R	P	E
O	O	E	M	O	C	L	E	W	O	R	S	H	I	P
I	R	I	Y	R	O	T	C	I	V	A	P	L	R	O
N	E	A	G	E	N	E	E	R	G	J	A	L	B	H
U	T	A	N	I	V	D	E	Y	D	U	I	U	E	S
D	A	I	W	G	L	O	T	A	T	P	N	F	A	I
N	W	L	I	F	E	E	L	I	I	H	T	Y	U	P
I	C	A	W	I	E	S	H	R	O	A	B	E	O	T
H	O	L	I	K	A	K	E	R	O	L	S	J	Y	G
P	L	U	V	R	R	C	V	N	L	O	D	L	N	N
H	O	G	P	I	N	E	F	O	N	O	I	E	S	I
A	R	W	S	A	S	I	W	G	O	M	O	C	T	R
G	S	H	D	T	R	H	S	G	A	N	N	A	P	
W	N	H	S	E	R	F	N	F	L	O	W	E	R	S
A	A	H	D	A	R	L	A	U	N	N	A	P	T	S

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Last Friday's Answer: Performance To purchase WONDERWORD books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

Fox, Ellis hit key free throws to help Kings beat Magic



ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—De'Aaron Fox hit tying and go-ahead free throws with 21.2 seconds left and finished with 31 points, and Keon Ellis added another free throw in the final seconds as the Sacramento Kings beat the Orlando Magic 109-107 on Saturday night.

After Fox tied the game at 107 and put the Kings ahead at 108-107, Ellis added another point with two seconds remaining and Sacramento ended Orlando's five-game win streak.

Paolo Banchero missed a long 3-pointer attempt at the buzzer for the Magic, who lost a similar game in double overtime at Sacramento on Jan. 3.

"We're trying to prove ourselves, just like them," said Ellis, who grew up 30 miles up the road in Eustis, Florida. "So when we're out here we're trying to earn each others' respect."

Ellis, who scored a career-high 19 points and added six assists, also hit a 22-footer that gave the Kings a five-point lead with 1:59 left.

"Keon was huge. He was freaking phenomenal," Sacramento coach Mike Brown said.

Domantas Sabonis had 21 points and 14 rebounds for Sacramento. It was his 53rd straight double-double, tying Kevin Love's streak in 2010-11, which is the longest since the ABA-NBA merger in 1976.

"Obviously a big, big accomplishment by Domas," Brown said. "But it's like clockwork for him with the 14 rebounds and 21 points."

Keegan Murray added 22 points for the Kings, who overcame Malik Monk's 0-for-11 shooting.

Jonathan Isaac matched his career high with 25 points for the Magic.

Banchero finished with 22 points, Franz Wagner added 18



Sacramento Kings guard Malik Monk (0) brings the ball down court against Orlando Magic center Moritz Wagner (21) during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Saturday, March 23, 2024, in Orlando, Fla.

and Cole Anthony came off the bench with 15 points, seven rebounds and six assists.

"That's a tough game, man," Anthony said. "It's a really good team, well coached. They've got some good players, but we had a chance to win a game. You can't ask for more than that in the NBA."

Isaac drew an ovation when he was taken out after an eight-minute stretch of the first half in which he produced 17 points, four rebounds and a block of Sabonis.

Sabonis scored five points during a 13-0 run in the third quarter that moved the Kings ahead 74-65, the largest lead of the game for either team.

"Nineteen lead changes, tied 13 times. I mean, that's the battle we've had with them," Magic coach Jamahl Mosley said. "It was similar to the game there. ... We'll just have to keep looking at these films and how we can learn from these situations."

The Kings overcame modest 43.7% shooting with just seven turnovers.

"We won the possession game while defending," Brown said, "and that's why we got a road win in a tough environment versus a really good team."

Caleb Houston started for the Magic, but left the game with an ankle injury in the first half.

KNICKS 105, NETS 93

NEW YORK (AP)—Donte DiVincenzo scored 31 points, Miles McBride had 26 and New York beat Brooklyn 105-93 on Saturday.

Jalen Brunson and Isaiah Hartenstein each had 17 points in New York's fifth win in six games. Brunson also had eight assists, and Hartenstein grabbed nine rebounds.

Brooklyn dropped its sixth consecutive game. Cam Thomas had 19 points for the Nets, and Mikal Bridges finished with 18.

Dennis Smith Jr. opened the

fourth quarter with a 3-pointer for Brooklyn, tying it at 80. But New York responded with a 12-0 run.

DiVincenzo scored the first seven points in the spurt on two layups and a 3-pointer. After Josh Hart scored on a putback, DiVincenzo made another 3 to make it 92-80 with 8:56 left.

HAWKS 132, HORNETS 91

ATLANTA (AP)—Dejounte Murray made a season-high seven 3-pointers while scoring 28 points and Atlanta beat Charlotte Hornets to strengthen their hold on the final spot in the Eastern Conference play-in tournament.

Bruno Fernando scored a career-high 25 points and Garrison Mathews had 20 for Atlanta, which opened a five-game homestand with its first home win over Charlotte since Nov. 20, 2021. The Hornets took home wins in the first two games of the season series.

Murray was 7 of 9 on 3s and set a season high with 12 assists.

The Hawks are 5 1/2 games ahead of No. 11 Brooklyn for 10th in the East.

WIZARDS 112, RAPTORS 109

WASHINGTON (AP)—Deni Avdija scored 22 points and grabbed 13 rebounds, Kyle Kuzma made some big baskets down the stretch to compensate for a rough shooting performance and Washington handed Toronto their 10th consecutive loss.

With just their third two-game winning streak of the season, the Wizards kept from falling below Detroit for the worst record in the NBA.

Bruce Brown missed a 3-point attempt at the buzzer that would have forced overtime, and the short-handed Raptors have not won since March 3.

This was arguably their best chance to end this skid - by far their longest of the season - especially after cutting down on the turnovers that hurt them in a home loss Friday night to Oklahoma City. But Toronto, playing without its top three leading scorers and down to just eight healthy players available, made some costly mistakes and faded late after leading by as many as 11.

CELTICS 124, BULLS 113

CHICAGO (AP)—Jayson Tatum scored 26 points, Sam Hauser and Al Horford added 23 apiece, and NBA-leading Boston won their ninth straight over Chicago.

Hauser made seven of Boston's 21 3-pointers, while Horford hit 5 of 10 from beyond the arc. Derrick White scored 17. Payton Pritchard added 15 points and eight assists, and the Celtics pulled within two wins of their season-best streak even though Jaylen Brown (sprained right ankle) and Kristaps Porzingis (right hamstring) sat out the game.

Boston scored nine straight to go up by eight early in the fourth quarter and hung on down the stretch. It was a six-point game when Luke Kornet scored on a tip-in and Tatum drove for a layup, making it 117-107 with 3:04 remaining.

DeMar DeRozan led Chicago with 26 points. Alex Caruso, Nikola Vucevic and Ayo Dosunmu each scored 14 as the Bulls dropped their second in a row.

ROCKETS 147, JAZZ 119

HOUSTON (AP)—Jalen Green scored 41 points, former Raptor Fred VanVleet added 10 3-pointers and a season-high 34 and Houston made a season-best 27 3-pointers to beat Utah

for their eighth straight win.

Jabari Smith Jr. and Kris Dunn were ejected five seconds into the second quarter after both were assessed technical fouls for fighting. The two threw punches at each other after they got tangled up while the ball was being brought up the court. Players and officials got between them before the scuffle could escalate further.

The Rockets' win streak is their longest since winning eight in a row in November 2019. Houston closed within 1 1/2 games of idle Golden State for 10th place and the last play-in spot in the Western Conference.

VanVleet scored 23 points on seven 3-pointers, and Green had 21 points on 9-of-12 shooting in the first half as the Rockets built an 85-55 halftime lead. Houston shot 65% in the first half and was 15 of 24 on 3s.

SUNS 131, SPURS 106

SAN ANTONIO (AP)—Devin Booker scored 32 points before sitting out the fourth quarter and Phoenix never trailed in steamrolling San Antonio to help their playoff positioning.

Kevin Durant added 25 points for Phoenix, which never trailed and led by as many as 32.

Victor Wembanyama had 13 points, five rebounds, four assists and a blocked shot in 21 minutes as San Antonio lost its third straight and eighth in 10 games. Keldon Johnson had 14 points.

Phoenix shot 59.6% in winning their eighth straight in San Antonio.

The Suns have won three straight to improve to 13 games above .500 for the first time this season. The surge comes at an opportune time as Phoenix (42-29) is a half-game ahead of Dallas (41-29) for the sixth and final automatic playoff berth in the Western Conference.

NUGGETS 114, TRAIL BLAZERS 111

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)—Reggie Jackson scored 23 points, Aaron Gordon had 22 points and 12 rebounds and Denver defeated Portland.

The Nuggets won without their star duo of Nikola Jokic and Jamal Murray on a night when the Blazers became the second team to start five rookies since NBA box scores started tracking starters in the 1971-72 season. The reigning champs have now won eight of their last nine.

Rookie Duop Reath led the Blazers in scoring with 24 points. Scoot Henderson, the No. 3 overall pick in the 2023 Draft, finished with 22 points and six assists as the Blazers dropped their sixth straight game.

NBA BRIEFS

Pelicans' Ingram expected to be sidelined at least 2 weeks with knee injury

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—New Orleans Pelicans high-scoring forward Brandon Ingram has a bone bruise in his left knee that is expected to sideline him at least two weeks, the team announced Friday. Ingram hyper-extended his knee during Thursday night's loss at Orlando and was helped off the court. He underwent an imaging overnight, after which team doctors determined the extent of the injury. The prognosis for Ingram, who has averaged 20.9 points this season, leaves open the possibility that he could return before the end of the regular season. The Pelicans (42-27) are in the thick of the Western Conference playoff picture. New Orleans entered Friday's action

1 1/2 games behind the Los Angeles Clippers for fourth place in the West. The top six teams in each conference advance to the first round of the NBA playoffs, while seeds seven through 10 participate in a play-in to determine the final two spots. The Pelicans say they expect updates on Ingram's readiness after he is re-evaluated in two weeks. The Pelicans play at Miami on Friday night and have seven games until the scheduled date of Ingram's re-evaluation.

Kings guard Kevin Huerter is sidelined with injured left shoulder

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—Sacramento Kings guard Kevin Huerter will be sidelined with a dislocated left shoulder and labral tear. Huerter has been out since getting injured Monday night in the first

quarter of a win against Memphis. The team said Thursday that treatment options are being evaluated and gave no time frame for when Huerter might be able to return. Sacramento is currently locked in a tight race to avoid the play-in tournament, with the Kings coming into the day in sixth place in the Western Conference, a half-game ahead of Dallas and Phoenix. The top six teams in the West will advance to the playoffs with the next four trying to qualify through the play-in tournament. Huerter has started 59 games this season for the Kings and is averaging 10.2 points per game—down from 15.2 points per game last season in his first campaign with Sacramento. His 3-point shooting has also dropped from 40.2% last season to 36.1% this season.

MLB investigating gambling, theft allegations involving Ohtani, interpreter



ENGLEWOOD, Colo. (AP)—

Justin Simmons' release isn't just collateral damage from the Russell Wilson debacle in Denver, but the latest sign of a shifting of priorities in the NFL that's resulted in a surplus of safeties flooding the free agent market.

Like inside linebackers and running backs before them, safeties are finding that teams are more and more inclined to prioritize passers, pass rushers, offensive and defensive linemen, wide receivers and cornerbacks.

This trend, combined with the \$85 million in dead cap charges facing the Broncos when they release Wilson as the new league year begins Wednesday, resulted in the Broncos cutting ties with Simmons to save \$14.5 million.

A cornerstone of the community, Simmons is a perennial All-Pro who leads the NFL with 30 interceptions since joining in the league in 2016. He also holds the distinction of having the most interceptions—five—of three-time Super Bowl champion Patrick Mahomes.

Simmons immediately shot toward the top of available free



Los Angeles Dodgers' Shohei Ohtani, left, and interpreter Ippei Mizuhara answer questions during a news conference at Dodger Stadium on Dec. 14, 2023, in Los Angeles.

agents, but his age (30), the glut of talent at his position and this shift in teams' financial focus could keep his earning power from skyrocketing.

When the New York Giants decided not to place one of their tags on Xavier McKinney, the free safety who allowed zero touchdowns last season looked prime to cash in as the cream of the safeties in free agency.

Then, the market was flooded as teams began dumping higher-priced safeties, including some with All-Pro pedigree such as Simmons, Kevin Byard, Eddie

Jackson and Jordan Poyer.

Jamal Adams, Eddie Jackson, Quandre Diggs and Rayshawn Jenkins also were cut this week and Marcus Maye is designated for a post-June 1 release from the Saints.

Poyer's departure from Buffalo was part of the Bills' massive makeover as they entered the offseason a projected NFL-high \$44 million over the salary cap, necessitating the release of five veterans and the restructuring of Von Miller's contract.

The Philadelphia Eagles cleared some \$13 million in cap space by releasing Byard,

a two-time All-Pro who, like Simmons, is 30 years old. He had one interception and 75 tackles in 10 games for the Eagles, who acquired him from Tennessee last season.

Chicago cut ties with Jackson, who had 15 interceptions and returned three for touchdowns in seven seasons. He also ran back three fumble recoveries for scores. He was an All-Pro in 2018 when he had six interceptions and two pick-6s.

The Seahawks' release of both Adams and Diggs leaves Julian Love as the only safety

with extensive playing time on Seattle's roster.

Injuries kept Adams from living up to his hefty pricetag in four disappointing seasons in Seattle but Diggs made three straight Pro Bowls from 2020-22 after coming over from Detroit via a trade in 2019.

The Jaguars released Jenkins along with two other starters,

cornerback Darious Williams and defensive tackle Foley Fatukasi, to create \$20 million in salary cap space.

The only safety franchise-tagged for 2024 was the Buccaneers' Antoine Winfield, guaranteeing him \$17.123 million next season, a number the slew of safeties on the open market will be hard-pressed to reach.

CHOJU

From page 16

stopped Palmes' 41-point effort with 17, 13, and 10 points, respectively. Marlon Binuya poured in 25 points in a losing cause for Bourbon Bar & Grill, while Richard Mendoza and John Paul Manansala chipped in 18 and 12 markers for the now 2-3 squad.

In the second game, Elite Force turned back a spirited rally by La Mesa Kusina, 80-72, in bracket B.

Elite Force got off to jackrabbit start and opened a double-digit lead in the first half, 47-32. La Mesa, however, found their groove in the second half and trimmed Elite Force's once-formidable lead to single digits before losing steam and running out of time at the end.

Manuel Gatbantón paced the now 3-2 Elite Force with 25 points, while Mark Aycardo and Arvin Razon chipped in 19 and 11 markers, respectively. La Mesa, which dropped to 2-4 in the standings, was led by the game-high 32 points by Webb Gontar with Gutierrez adding 15 points.

Last Thursday, Unity Trade edged Best Real, 88-86, to improve to 4-1 in the B bracket. Best Real lost for the third time in five games.

In the nightcap, TanHold-

ings caught up with KagBros in the B bracket standings at 5-1 after beating Napa Auto Parts, 97-81, which dropped to zero losses in five games.

In last Tuesday's games, KagBros maintained its lead in the B bracket at 5-1 following a 110-78 conquest of Longshot, which dropped to 2-3.

In the second game, Yuman took down SaveMore to raise its win-loss record to an even 3-3, while dropping the latter's record to 1-4 in the A bracket.

First Game

Choju 100 – Palmes 41, J. Aguon 17, H. Aguon 13, Mammis 10, Pangelinan 7, Lizama 6, Faisao 4, Babauta 3.

Bourbon Bar & Grill 82 – Binuya 25, Mendoza 18, Manansala 12, Leightly 9, Esmores 8, Lacanilao 4, Borinngit 2, Mallari 2.

Scoring by halves: 39-35, 100-82.

Second Game

Elite Force 80 – Gatbantón 25, Aycardo 19, Razon 11, Hernandez 9, Fernando 7, Reyes 6, Sy 3.

La Mesa Kusina 72 – Gontar 32, Gutierrez 15, Bongolan 6, Albert 4, Agustin 4, Flores 3, Taraya 2, Apelo 2, Hernandez 2, Velasco 2.

Scoring by halves: 47-32, 80-72.

TANIA

From page 16

about the challenging windy and rainy conditions.

"It was really windy and rainy, especially on the way out. I wasn't expecting that, but it was overall really fun, so it was good."

As she gears up to represent the CNMI in the 2024 World Athletics Cross Country Championships in Belgrade, Serbia, she shared that she joined NMI Women's Run only for fun.

"Honestly, I was just going out to have fun. I'm here for spring break and the race happened to be here while I was on island, so I was like, I'll just sign up. Then, yeah, I like how it's all-women's only. It was nice seeing a lot of women come out to run here, even just walking. So, yeah, it was nice," she said, while thanking all the sponsors and organizers of the women's run.

In the age division, Princes Jose was the only U18 runner who completed the 10K course, finishing in a time of 1:21:57. In the open category, Donna Pascual wrapped up after a 1:40:33 to finish first followed by Cassidy Lizama in 1:49:56.

In the 30-34 division, Jove Taman, Annie Trusso, and Bonny Grow finished 1-2-3 with times of 58:35, 1:01:33, and 1:14:15, respectively.

Kerri Bauer topped the 35-39 division in 57:43, followed



Participants of the 10K and 5K segments of last Saturday's 4th Annual NMI Women's Run pose for a group photo in front of the starting/finish arch at the Hyatt Regency Saipan parking lot.

by Alyona Gersonde in 1:03:04 and Megumi West in 1:05:58.

The 40-44 age division was won by Angela Taflinger in 55:26 with Shawna Brennfleck in 55:51 and Kathy Ruszala in 57:53 trailing close behind.

Ann Bang and Myuki Ishihara were in the 45-49 with Bang coming in first in 53:01 with Ishihara second in 1:05:54.

Marilou Carlos and Frances Pangelinan competed in the 50-54 open with the former topping the race in 1:01:23 and the latter's time of 1:31:47 good for second.

Miriam Dilse was the only runner in the 55-59 division and she completed the course with a time of 1:03:22. In the 60-64 division, Marie Sablan tore the tape in 1:19:05, followed by Lynette Tenorio in 1:27:23.

The event, organized by the Northern Marianas Athletics, Run Saipan and the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence,

was not only held to celebrate International Women's Day and International Women's Month 2024, but also to show support to women who were victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

NMCADSV executive director Maisie B. Tenorio shared why such an event was so important as well as extended her gratitude to fellow organizers and sponsors.

"I work at the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. We're so thankful to Northern Marianas Athletics and Run Saipan for offering to collaborate with us on this event."

Tenorio said she's thankful that NMA and Run Saipan reached out to NMCADSV to partner with them in organizing the Women's Run this year.

"This year they wanted to collaborate with us because they recognized that many fatigued survivors of domestic violence

are involved. They just wanted to create an empowering event for all the women in the CNMI but also recognize that some of them may also be survivors. We help organized this event as a way to let survivors know that there are people in the running community who support them, who see them, who want them to thrive, and maybe even use running as a way to help them along their journey. We're so thankful to NMA and Run Saipan for including us in their annual event."

Tenorio is now hopeful that the women's run collaboration with NMA and Run Saipan would become an annual event.

"It's definitely on the drawing board for something for us to do with them annually. We're definitely open to it," she said.

Results of the 5K segment of the 4th Annual NMI Women's Run will be published in the next issue of *Saipan Tribune*.

DOC

From page 16

years. He was also the very first Saipan-born Chamorro to make it to the UFC."

Torres said his vision and goal as an instructor at Trench Tech is to impart and instill a sense of balance between his students' physical training and mental well-being.

"I want to encourage them to focus on continuous improvement in their skills, technique, and overall performance, while emphasizing the importance of dedication and hard work. I also want to teach them the value of grit, resilience, and mental toughness in facing challenges both inside and outside of competition enhancing their emotional intelligence, and help them develop a strong growth-mindset to overcome setbacks and stay focused on the goal."

Torres said another of his goals is to teach his students the importance of respect and

humility and encourage them to compete with honor, win or lose.

"I want to help them set clear, achievable goals both in their MMA or BJJ career and personal life; and teach them the value of teamwork and the sense of community by encouraging them to support and uplift their peers. By focusing on these goals and visions, I believe we can develop these young practitioners not only as skilled athletes, but also as well-rounded individuals ready to face the challenges of their sport and life with confidence and determination. Ultimately, I want to help create and mold future great leaders in our Commonwealth," he said.

With Torres onboard, Trench Tech Gym now has three certified black belts counting Alvarez and Clinton Dela Cruz. Aside from the Monday 8pm-9pm classes Torres is teaching, there is also NoGi grappling class every Wednesdays from 6:30pm to 8pm.



Fox, Ellis
hit key free
throws to help
Kings beat
Magic.

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Saipan Tribune Sports

MLB investigating
gambling, theft
allegations
involving Ohtani,
interpreter.

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Tania tops Women's Run 10K



LAO ZHANG

Tania Tan smiles after topping the 10K race of last Saturday's 4th Annual NMI Women's Run at the Hyatt Regency Saipan parking lot.

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
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CORRESPONDENT

Two-time Pacific Games gold medalist and reigning NMSA Athlete of the Year Tania Tan won the 10K race of the 4th Annual NMI Women's Run held last Saturday.

The 22-year-old graduate student at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa made short work of the course from the Hyatt Regency Saipan to Puerto Rico and back with a time of 38:56. Following behind her and securing a second-place finish



ish was Akiko Miller with the time of 43:42, while Addalee Taflinger took third after checking in at 52:30.

Although threatening weather loomed, the runners pushed through and in a brief conversation, Tan shared a little more

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DOC chief Torres is newest Trench Tech instructor

By MARK RABAGO
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EDITOR



Department of Correction Commissioner Anthony Torres, the first Chamorro to ever fight in the Ultimate Fighting Championship, is the newest instructor at Trench Tech Gym.

Trench Tech owner and fellow black belt Justis "Cuki" Alvarez welcomed Torres and said the local mixed martial arts scene is lucky to have Torres in the fold.

"Anthony Torres brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to Trench Tech with his experience in training with some of the best fighter-athletes in the world as well as numerous high-profile black belts in Hawaii and Arizona while



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Department of Correction Commissioner Anthony Torres, center, will be Trench Tech Gym's newest instructor. He will run their NoGi Monday classes from 8pm to 9pm.

he lived there. This is a huge plus for Trench Tech and his knowledge in the arts is a great way for our academy to diversify our training and allow students to broaden their skillset working with different black belt instructors," he said.

Torres said it's indeed an honor and a privilege to be a part of

Trench Tech and what Alvarez is trying to build in the local MMA community.

"He is a great instructor and pioneer of the sport here in the Northern Marianas. On top of my demanding and busy schedule, I chose to be an instructor at Trench Tech, because I wanted to give back to our people and

share my knowledge to help build our MMA and jiu-jitsu community here in our islands. Additionally, engaging as an instructor keeps me mentally and physically fit. It's also an opportunity to build relationships with my students, maintain a work-life balance, helps me further develop my leadership skills, communication abilities, which directly translates to my role as a public servant. Ultimately, it provides me a well-rounded and fulfilling lifestyle that nurtures both my professional and personal growth not just as a leader, but as a human being committed to a lifetime of self-improvement."

Alvarez said at Trench Tech, the Corrections chief will run their NoGi Monday classes from 8pm to 9pm.

"Anthony is a black belt in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and has been training for over 18

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Choju still unscathed in Legends caging

By MARK RABAGO
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EDITOR

Choju remained undefeated in the Legends Sports Association Invitational Basketball League Season 2 after thumping Bourbon Bar & Grill, 100-82, last Saturday at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Gymnasium in Gualo Rai.

Jay Art Palmes was front and center in Choju's sixth win as many games in the A bracket after exploding for 41 points.

The hot-shooting guard torched all defenders tasked

to guard him by scoring 13 points with three triples in the first 20 minutes of action as he helped Choju to a modest 39-35 lead at the half.

Little did Bourbon Bar & Grill know, the 5'4" guard was just getting started as he

went from scorching in the first half to nuclear in the second half, exploding for 28 points including six triples as Choju broke the game wide open and won by 18 points.

Junior Aguon, Henry Aguon, and Gerald Mamis back-

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MARK RABAGO

Jay Art Palmes exploded for 41 points in Choju's lopsided win against Bourbon Bar & Grill in the Legends Sports Association Invitational Basketball League Season 2 last Saturday at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Gymnasium in Gualo Rai.